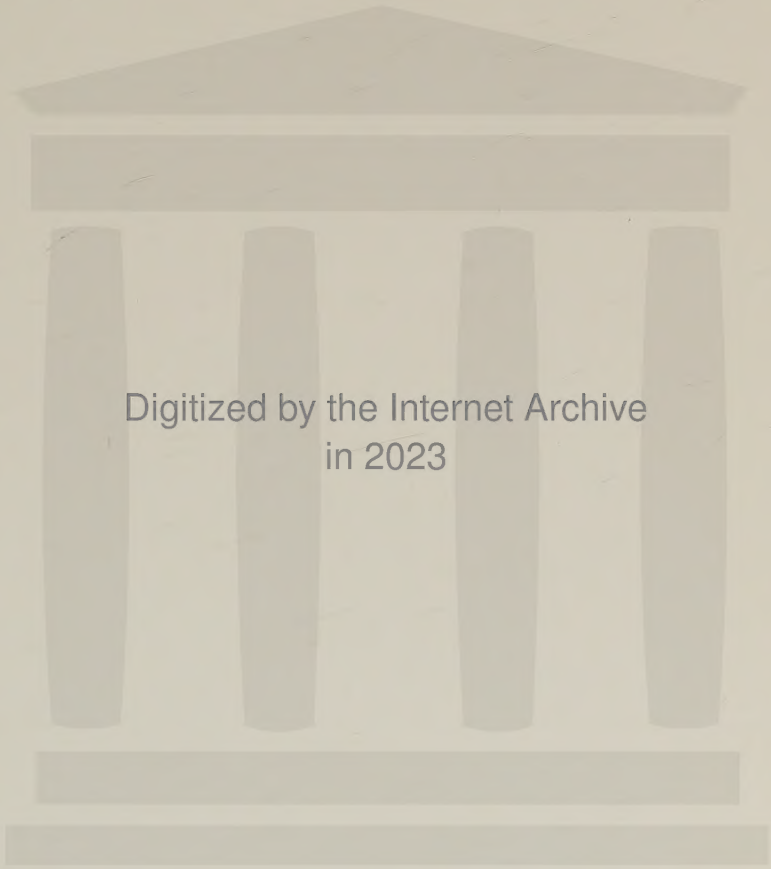
A Book of Religious Knowledge

Waheed Ahmad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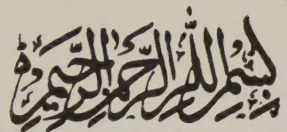

A BOOK OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE

(For Ahmadi Muslims)

Second Edition

Waheed Ahmad

AHM

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First Edition, 1988

Second Edition, 1995

ISBN 1 882494 05 9

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publishing Data

Ahmad, Waheed

A book of religious knowledge (for Ahmadi Muslims)/Waheed Ahmad - c 1995

352 p.: ill; 22cm.

ISBN 1 882494 05 9

1. Islamic education 2. The Holy Quran - Selected - Theology.
3. The Holy Prophet Muhammad - Biography.
4. Islamic History. 5. Ahmadiyya - Introduction.

BP195 A 5 297.5-20dc.

Printed in the United States of America
Fazl-i-Umar Press, Athens, Ohio 45701

BRANTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

APR - - 2002

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FOREWORD

This religious study material is prepared primarily for the benefit of young Ahmadi Muslims who are living in countries where English is the primary language of instruction.

The study of any religion is a fairly demanding task and the religion of Islam is no exception. An effort, therefore, has been made to present this religion, its history and relationship with other faiths, in as systematic a manner as possible. Wherever possible, information is supplemented by charts, maps and tables which are always easier to understand than the written text. A number of exercises and work-sheets are also included at the end of this book on the premise that one learns better by writing than by reading only.

This book is divided into six sections.

Section 1 deals with the religion of Islam including its beliefs, acts of worship and the social and moral codes. A special feature of this section is the chronological listing of all Quranic and Biblical prophets and of prophets and Scriptures of other religions.

Section 2 is devoted to the study of the Holy Quran and gives the reader a general knowledge of what the Holy Quran contains.

Section 3 covers the life of the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah upon him, from his birth in 570 AD to his death in 632 AD.

Section 4 deals with the Successors of the Holy Prophet and the various Caliphate dynasties that followed. A brief account of the development of sects in Islam is also included here.

Section 5 is on the history of Ahmadiyyat from the time of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's birth to the period of the Fourth Khalifah. This section also deals with the important differences between Ahmadi and Sunni beliefs.

Section 6 is on the study of Comparative Religions and covers the various classifications of religions, their origins, essential beliefs, modes of worship, religious philosophies, wisdoms and comparisons with the religion of Islam. The survey covers all major religions of the world including Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Shinto, Zoroastrianism, Judaism and Christianity.

The purpose of this book is to give the student a broad outline of the religious knowledge pertaining to Islam and make available to him, in one volume, all necessary information which otherwise may have to be looked up in a number of different books.

For the sake of simplicity, many beliefs and historic events have been dealt with very briefly; and consideration of space has caused many details to be omitted here and there. Nevertheless, the treatment of the various subjects presented here is quite adequate for most students. For those who wish to pursue further reading on these subjects, a selected bibliography is given at the end of this book.

The writing of this book grew out of the weekly instruction given to the Ahmadi children of Vancouver in their Sunday School, over a period of three years. It was indeed the enthusiasm displayed by these children and their obvious eagerness to learn more about their religion, which encouraged the writer to undertake the preparation of this book. It is for this reason that the writer dedicates this book to the Ahmadi children of Vancouver, Canada. May God bless them and ever increase their apetite for learning. Our children are our most precious asset and their proper education and upbringing should not be taken lightly.

Finally, I would like to extend my appreciation and gratitude to all those persons who read the manuscript and made valuable comments and suggestions. All responsibility for any errors or omissions rests solely with the writer.

Pir Waheed Ahmad
Toronto, Canada

January 1988

SECTION 1

ISLAM

THE RELIGION OF OBEDIENCE

THE RELIGION OF MAN

Before we talk about the religion of Islam, we must explain what we mean by the word ***religion.*** We know that there are many religions in the world today such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and, of course, Islam. The question we want to ask then is: what is the common factor among all these religions? Before we answer this question let us take a look at some religious people, of whatever faith they may be, and compare them with the people who do not follow any religion. In such a comparison we notice some important differences between the two groups:

1. The religious people believe in something while the others do not.
2. The religious people perform certain acts of worship while the others do not.
3. The religious people seem to follow a certain code for their social and moral behaviour while the others do not.
4. The religious people find a purpose of life and have a definite philosophy towards it, while the others do not.

Now, we can make an attempt at phrasing a definition of religion:

> ***Religion is a system of beliefs and worships which includes a code of ethics and a philosophy of life***

As we mentioned earlier, there are many religions in the world today. Some of these religions are of recent origin but most of them are very old. In fact we know from history that man has always had a religion. Even the primitive men living in caves or jungles had some sort of religion. The concepts and rituals in man's religion have continually evolved and become more rational and sophisticated as time went on. The primitive religions of the Cave Man and the Bush Man gave rise to the modern religions of the past three thousand years. Today, the major religions of the world include:

Religion	Originated in	Religion	Originated in
Zoroastrianism	Iran	Confucianism, Taoism	China
Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism	India	Judaism, Christianity, Islam	Near East
Shinto	Japan		

These are the great religions of the world which are not only responsible for all our accumulated wealth of wisdom, philosophy, ethics, and social and moral codes, but have influenced the culture, the language and the moral attitudes of almost every person living today.

WHAT IS ISLAM

Islam is the last of the great religions and contains in itself the essential principles of all earlier religions. Islam is a strongly monotheistic religion with the worship of One God as its central theme. Islam was founded by the Prophet Muhammad some 1400 years ago, and establishes the continuity of God's revelation which had descended upon earlier prophets such as Abraham, Moses, David and Jesus. Islam, in fact, requires its followers to believe in all earlier prophets and Scriptures. According to Islam all the great religions that preceded it were revealed by God to His chosen messengers.

A Jew today believes only in the prophets of Israel; a Christian believes in Jesus Christ and, to a lesser degree, in the prophets of Israel; a Buddhist believes only in Buddha and a Zoroastrian in Zoroaster; a Hindu in the sages who appeared in India and a Confucian in Confucius. But a Muslim believes in all these prophets and also in the prophethood of Muhammad, peace be upon him.

The word Islam in the Arabic language is derived from the root SLM and means "peace" and "obedience". The religion is called Islam because it offers peace and requires complete submission to the

will of God. According to the Quran, there is only one religion acceptable to God and that is complete submission to His Will. In the broader sense of the word Islam was also the religion of the earlier prophets like Abraham, Moses and Jesus, because they also submitted themselves to the will and obedience of God. This element of universality is unique to Islam and goes beyond the traditional barriers set up between religions. Islam not only endorses the bonafide status of all earlier prophets and revealed books, but also of any future prophets that may come. Thus Islam is not a religion of an ethnic group or a nation, but the religion of mankind.

Islam is not a new religion in the sense that most of its teachings are those that were also given to earlier peoples like the Jews and the Christians. Islam, however, does bring together in one place the best of all earlier teachings and presents them in a perspective completely unknown before. Islam offers far greater insight into the various attributes of God, the purpose of sending messengers, the nature of the Day of Judgment, and man's relationship with his Lord.

Finally, the religion of Islam is not a mere collection of rites and rituals but a complete system of strong moral convictions, true sincerity brought to the worship of God and the service of humanity, giving up of worldly desires in favour of spiritual achievements, a moral courage in undertaking what one believes to be right and in abstaining from what one believes to be wrong, and a genuine fear of God.

The study of Islam has been dealt with under four broad headings in this Section:

- Beliefs
- Acts of Worship
- Codes for Social and Moral Behaviour
- Philosophy of Life

A summary of what is included under each heading is given below:

A. BELIEFS
- in One God
- in the Angels
- in the Prophets
- in the Revealed Books
- in the Day of Judgment

B.	ACTS OF WORSHIP	• Declaration of faith • Prayer • Fasting • Pilgrimage • Zakat or giving of prescribed alms
C.	CODES FOR SOCIAL AND MORAL BEHAVIOUR	• looking after the orphans, the poor, the wayfarer, the widows and the neighbours • discharging of trusts • truthfulness • honesty • carrying out of justice • kindness to parents and children • prohibitions from social vices • other codes governing the institutions of marriage, divorce and inheritance
D.	PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE	• the purpose of man's existence • worship of God and service to humanity • ultimate goal to find God

ISLAMIC BELIEFS

The four aspects of Islam mentioned earlier could be grouped into two parts: the theoretical and the practical. One concerns the beliefs and philosophy of Islam while the other deals with the implementation of these beliefs and principles in the daily life. In the Holy Quran, these two broad divisions are referred to as ***Iman,*** meaning faith or belief and ***Aamal,*** meaning deeds or actions.

The beliefs could be called the foundation of Islam, hidden from the view but supporting the superstructure of Islamic actions. The belief, or faith, is concerned with our thoughts, our principles and our convictions. For our actions to be meaningful in the eyes of God, they must be based on proper beliefs. In the religion of Islam, *Iman* constitutes acceptance of the truth brought by the Prophet Muhammad. The rejection of this truth amounts to *kufr* or disbelief.

The beliefs in Islam are not based on superstition or irrational conviction. They are presented in the Holy Quran in a systematic way and are supported by logical arguments. In Islam a belief must make sense

to the believer; otherwise it becomes a dogma or a superstition. There are many beliefs in Islam but five of these, called the ***Five Articles of Faith,*** are the most important. These are:

1. Belief in God
2. Belief in the Angels
3. Belief in the Prophets
4. Belief in the Revealed Books
5. Belief in the Day of Judgment

Now, one by one, we will discuss in detail these various articles of faith.

1. BELIEF IN GOD

The doctrine of God is the foundation of the religion of Islam and is central to the teachings of the Holy Quran. God is the Supreme Being Who exists independently of everything else. He is the sole Creator of the universe, the Maker of heaven and earth. According to Islam, no event occurs in this universe without God's knowledge and implicit consent. He is the ultimate source of every action and happening, animate or inanimate. God created not only the galaxies and stars, but also the life-form on this earth. He is the Nourisher and Sustainer of all creation; He is their Lord.

For human beings, He is a very personal God. He listens to their supplications and prayers. He provides for all their needs. He overlooks their shortcomings and forgives their excesses. He is there whenever they need Him, in distress or prosperity. He deals with His creation with mercy, love and compassion.

The one most highly emphasized aspect of God in Islam is His Unity. God is One. He has no associates. He is neither born of anyone nor gives birth to anyone. He shares His supremacy in the universe with no one. To associate anyone else with God is ***shirk*** (ascribing partners with Him) and it is a grave sin in Islam.

The proper name of God in the Arabic language is ***Allah.*** The word Allah existed among the Arabs even before Islam. To the Arabs, however, Allah was not the only God. They associated many other subordinate deities with Him. Islam abolished this polytheism and

restored Godhood to One Supreme Being, Allah. While Allah is the proper name of God in the Arabic language, the general word for god or deity in Arabic is *Ilah.* The concept of a Supreme Being also exists in other religions and in this respect the Allah in Arabic represents:

EL of the Canaanites
ELOHIM or YAHWEH (JEHOVAH) of the Hebrews
ELAH in the Aramaic language of jesus Christ
YAZDAN or KHUDA of the Persians
BRAHMAN in Sanskrit
DEUS in Latin
THEOS in Greek
DIEU in French
GOTT in German, and
GOD in the English language

Although the proper name of God is Allah, we know Him generally through His attributes. These attributes describe the various powers God possesses and are in fact His manifestations. God's attributes are innumerable since human intellect cannot possibly comprehend every aspect of the Supreme Being. In the Holy Quran and Hadith we are taught 99 attributes of God which are given below in alphabetical order. These are also known as ***al-Asmaul Husna*** or "the Most Excellent Names".

al-Adl, The Just
al-Ahad, The One
al-Ali, The High
al-Awwal, The First
al-Azeez, The Mighty
al-Ba'ith, The Resurrector
al-Bari, The Originator
al-Baseer, The All-Seeing
al-Batin, The Hidden
Dhul-Jalal-wal-Ikram, The Lord of Majesty and Bounty
al-Ghafur, The All-forgiving
al-Hadi, The Guide
al-Hakam, The Judge
al-Afu, The Pardoner
al-Akhir, The Last
al-Aleem, The-Knowing
al-Azeem, The Great
al-Badi, The Incomparable
al-Baqi, The Everlasting
al-Barr, The Benign
al-Basit, The Expander
ad-Dhar, The Distresser
al-Fattah, The Opener
al-Ghaffar, The Forgiver
al-Ghanee, The Self-Sufficient
al-Hafeez, The Preserver
al-Hakeem, The Wise

al-Haleem, The Forbearing
al-Haqq, The True
al-Hayy, The Living
al-Jaleel, The Sublime
al-Kabeer, The Great
al-Khabeer, The Knowing
al-Khaliq, The Creator
al-Majeed, The Glorious
al-Malik, The Sovereign
Malik-ul-Mulk, The Owner of Sovereignty
al-Mubdi, The Originator
al-Muhaymin, The Protector
al-Muhyi, The Giver of Life
al-Mu'izz, The Honourer
al-Mumin, The Guardian of Faith
al-Muqaddim, The Expediter
al-Muqsit, The Just
al-Musawwir, The Fashioner
al-Mutakabbir, The Majestic
an-Nafi, The Propitious
al-Qabid, The Constrictor
al-Qahhar, The Subduer
al-Qayyum, The Self-Subsisting
ar-Rafe, The Exalter
ar-Rahman, The Gracious
ar-Rasheed, The Guide to the Right Path
as-Sabur, The Patient
as-Samad, The Eternal
ash-Shaheed, The Witness
at-Tawwab, The Oft-Returning
al-Wahhab, The Bestower
al-Wajid, The Finder
al-Walee, The Friend
al-Warith, The Inheritor
al-Zahir, The Manifest

al-Hameed, The Praiseworthy
al-Haseeb, The Reckoner
al-Jabbar, The Compeller
al-Jame, The Gatherer
al-Kareem, The Generous
al-Khafid, The Abaser
al-Lateef, The Subtle One
al-Majid, The Noble
al-Mani, The Preventer
al-Mateen, The Firm
al-Mu'akhir, The Postponer
al-Mughni, The Enricher
al-Muhsi, The Reckoner
al-Mu'id, The Restorer
al-Mujeeb, The Responser
al-Mumeet, The Giver of Death
al-Muntaqim, The Avenger
al-Muqeet, The Sustainor
al-Muqtadir, The Powerful
al-Muta'li, The Most Exalted
al-Muzill, The Abaser
an-Nur, The Light
al-Qadir, The Powerful
al-Qawi, The Strong
al-Quddus, The Holy
ar-Raheem, The Merciful
ar-Raqeeb, The Watchful
ar-Rauf, The Compassionate
ar-Razzaq, The Provider
as-Salam, The Source of Peace
as-Samee, The All-Hearing
ash-Shakur, The Appreciator
al-Wadud, The Loving
al-Wahid, The Unique
al-Wakeel, The Trustee
al-Wali, The Governor
al-Wasi, The All-Embracing

Some attributes of God are mentioned in *Ayat al-Kursi,* the 256th verse of *Surah al-Baqarah.* This verse is commonly considered to be the noblest verse of the Holy Quran and was called the loftiest verse by the Prophet Muhammad:

Allah — there is no god but He, the Living, the Self-Subsisting, Eternal.
Slumber siezes Him not, nor sleep.
To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth
Who is there who can intercede with Him without His permission?
He knows what is apparent and what is hidden.
And they encompass nothing of His knowledge except what He pleases.
His throne extends over the heavens and the earth; and the care of them tires Him not.
He is the Most High, the Supreme. (2:256)

Similarly, the first seven verses of *Surah al-Hadid,* the 57th Chapter of the Holy Quran, present a very clear and concise view of the Islamic concept of God:

All that is in the heavens and the earth glorifies God;
He is the Mighty, the Wise.
His is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth;
He gives life and He causes death;
And He has power over all things.
He is the First and the Last, the Manifest and the Hidden;
And He has full knowledge of all things.
He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six periods,
Then He settled Himself upon the Throne.
He knows what enters the earth, and what comes out of it,
And what descends from heaven and what goes up into it.
And He is with you wherever you may be;
And God sees all that you do.
His is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth;
And to Him are all affairs referred.
He causes the night to pass into the day,
And He causes the day to pass into the night.
And He knows well all that is in the breasts. (57:2-7)

2. BELIEF IN THE ANGELS

Angels are spiritual beings who are assigned various duties by God and carry them out as commanded by Him. In the Arabic language the word for angel is ***malak*** meaning "power" while in the Hebrew language an angel is called *mal'akh* meaning messenger. The English word angel is derived from the Greek *angelos,* also meaning messenger. The literal meaning of the word angel thus points more to the function of such beings rather than to their nature. In the Quran, therefore, the angels are frequently referred to as ***rasul*** or messengers.

Although angels are spoken of as beings, they have not been granted the choice of doing right or wrong, as the human beings have been; the angels automatically carry out the command of God. In this respect, the angels may be said to be the powers of nature. The function of the angels is to obey; they cannot disobey. The various tasks assigned to the angels include:

- bringing of divine revelations to the prophets
- bringing punishment upon their enemies
- giving glad tidings to the believers
- glorifying God with His praise
- keeping records of people's deeds

The concept of angels exists in Judaism and Christianity as well, and the names of some of the angels the Muslims believe in are mentioned in the Bible:

Jibrail	(Gabriel in the Bible)
Mikail	(Michael in the Bible)
Israfeel	(Raphael in the Bible)
Izrail	(Israel in the Bible)

It was the Angel *Jibrail* (Gabriel) who used to bring the Quranic revelations to the Prophet Muhammad.

3. BELIEF IN THE PROPHETS

After the doctrine of the absolute Unity of God, perhaps the most important assertion made in the Holy Quran is that God has always

been revealing His will to men through prophets and messengers. Belief in all prophets, therefore, is a fundamental article of faith in Islam. After Adam, the first known prophet, God continued to address mankind through a number of messengers, to warn people that their happiness lay in worshiping Him and in submitting themselves to His Will, and to tell them of the terrible consequences of His disobedience.

The Arabic and Hebrew word for prophet is ***nabi*** which is derived from the root NABA which means "to announce" or "give news of matters unseen". The prophets are called nabi because they announce the good news to the believers, give warnings to the disbelievers and make prophecies about future events. In the Quran the prophets are frequently called ***rasul*** which means a messenger. The two words are used interchangeably in the Quran, meaning the same thing. The English word "prophet" is derived from the Greek word "prophetes". The English words "prophet" and "prophecy" are today commonly associated with the idea of predicting the future. Although the prophets do make prophecies, their function is not limited to just predicting the future.

The prophets are appointed by God and are His authorized spokesmen. They serve as a channel of communication between the Divine and human worlds. The prophets have a mission and a mandate from God which they carry out despite great opposition.

The basic function of the prophets is to reform the people among whom they are raised and to bring them closer to God. What separates the prophets from saints and other men of religion is the great frequency with which God communicates with them and gives them intimation of future events.

A Muslim believes that prophets appeared in all nations of the world. A Muslim believes not only in the Israelite prophets mentioned in the Holy Quran and the Bible but also in the prophets of other religions such as Zoroaster, Krishna, Ram Chandar, Buddha, and so on. A Muslim believes that all prophets were sent by God for the guidance of mankind.

As to the total number of prophets that have come since Adam,

nothing is known with any great deal of certainty. The study of comparative religions is relatively new and a great deal of work is required to identify religious personalities who either founded the various religions or furthered their cause.

The Quran mentions only twenty-five prophets by name while the Bible mentions about fifty. Most of the Quranic prophets can be identified with their Biblical counterparts: *Yaqub* of the Quran is the Biblical Jacob, *Haroon* in the Quran is Aaron in the Bible, *Shuaib* of the Quran is the Biblical Jethro, and so on.

There is no doubt that the maximum number of known prophets have come in the Babylonian-Palestinian area and we will look at these prophets in some detail. A glance at the history of these Near Eastern prophets shows that there are seven distinct prophetic periods. One by one we will look at these periods.

(i) The Early Prophets

The earliest of all known prophets was, of course, Adam. Historians place the time of Adam at around four thousand years before Christ (4,000 B.C), and think that he lived in the fertile area between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers known as Mesopotamia.

Contrary to popular belief, Adam was not the first created man. People already existed before Adam. Modern research in the science of evolution demonstrates this fact very clearly that human beings evolved, over a long period of time, from simpler and more primitive animal life. Adam marks that specific stage in this evolutionary process at which God started to communicate with human beings.

Among the early generations of Adam rose such notable prophets as Enoch (Idris), Noah and Hud. Both the Bible and the Quran give detailed accounts of the Flood that came during the time of Noah and took the lives of many disbelievers. Noah and his followers took refuge in an ark which he had built on divine command.

(ii) The House of Abraham

After the early prophets, we run into a period in history where few if any prophets are known. Then around 2,000 B.C. we come to the

most noble family in history, the House of Abraham. Prophet Abraham has the distinction of being the Patriarch of not only the Israelites but also the Quraysh of Mecca, among whom the Prophet of Islam was raised.

Two other well known prophets lived at the same time as Abraham. These two contemporaries of his were Lot and Saleh. Lot was also a nephew of Abraham. The people of Lot and the people of Saleh, both rejected their prophets and, as a consequence of God's punishment, were wiped out from the face of the earth.

Returning to the House of Abraham, we find that both his sons, Isaac and Ishmael, were prophets. Ishmael eventually came and settled down in Mecca and, with the help of his father, built the Ka'ba. From Abraham's other son Isaac, his grandson Jacob and his great-grandson Joseph were also prophets. Prophet Muhammad is said to have remarked once that the Prophet Joseph had the noblest descent or lineage among all people; this is because his father, his grandfather and his great-grandfather were all prophets.

Prophet Jacob received the title "Israel" meaning "one who prevails with God," in the Old Testament. This is why his descendents are called Banu Israel or Israelites.

Prophet Joseph's story is narrated in some detail in the Quran. Because of their envy for him, his brothers had left Joseph in a waterless well from where he was picked up by some passing travelers who took him to Egypt. There he was sold as a slave to a nobleman. After being falsely accused of indecency by the nobleman's wife, Joseph was thrown in the prison. While in prison he became well known for his accurate interpretation of dreams and came to the notice of the king who eventually released him and appointed him as a governor.

From the time of Joseph, the history of the Israelites and the history of the Biblical prophets is intertwined. As Prophet Joseph was appointed to a high office in Egypt, many Israelites migrated to that land from their homeland in the Canaan-Babylonia area. The later kings in Egypt, however, treated the Israelites badly who spent the next three hundred years in bondage and servitude under their Egyptian masters.

PROPHETS OF THE QURAN AND THE BIBLE

(Biblical prophets in capitals, Quranic in brackets)

THE EARLY PROPHETS					History
4000 B.C.	*ADAM*	*(Adam)*			The first Prophet
	ENOCH	*(Idris)*			
	NOAH	*(Nooh)*			The Great Flood
		(Hood)			

THE HOUSE OF ABRAHAM					
2165-1990	*ABRAHAM*	*(Ibrahim)*	*LOT (Loot)*	*(Saleh)*	*Ka'aba re-built*
2065-1885	*ISAAC*	*(Is'haq)*	*ISHMAEL*	*(Isma'eel)*	
2005-1858	*JACOB*	*(Yaqub)*			
1914-1804	*JOSEPH*	*(Yusuf)*			Hebrews follow Joseph to Egypt
					Israel in Bondage under the Egyptian Kings

MOSAIC PERIOD					
1525-1405	*MOSES*	*(Musa)*	*AARON (Harun)*	*JETHRO (Shuaib)*	Exodus
					Israelites wandering in the desert
1043 B.C.					SAUL becomes the first Israelite King
					United Kingdom of Israel

THE KINGDOM PROPHETS

1040 B.C. SAMUEL
1020-970 GAD
1010-925 NATHAN
1011-971 DAVID (Da'ood)
971-931 SOLOMON (Sulaiman)

United Kingdom of Israel

Northern Kingdom of Israel		Southern Kingdom of Judah	
B.C.		*B.C.*	
931-908	*AHIJAH*	*931-901*	*SHEMAIAH*
920-903	*IDDO*	*900-875*	*AZARIAH*
890-865	*JEHU*	*895-870*	*HANANI*
875-852	*ELIJAH (Elias)*	*865-835*	*JAHAZIEL*
860-	*MICAIAH*	*840-825*	*OBADIAH*
851-795	*ELISHA (Al-Yasa'a)*	*825-810*	*JOEL*
788-772	*JONAH (Yunus)*		
767-755	*AMOS*		
755-712	*HOSEA*	*740-692*	*ISAIAH*
737-722	*ODED*	*734-700*	*MICAH*
722	Capital Samaria conquered by Assyria		
		650-620	*NAHUM*
		635-622	*ZEPHANIAH*
		635-610	*HULDAH*
		625-610	*JEREMIAH*
		620-608	*HABAKKUK*
586	Fall of Jerusalem *(Conquest by Babylon) Israelites exiled from Jerusalem*	*605-535*	*DANIEL*
		593-560	*EZEKIEL (Dhul-Kifl)*

539	Israelites return to Jerusalem and start restoration of the city	-	*JOB (Ayub)*
		520-505	*HAGGAI*
		520-490	*ZECHARIAH*
		480-458	*EZRA (Uzair)*
	Old Testament ends here	*433-415*	*MALACHI*

400 Silent Years
(no known prophets among
the Israelites)

THE CHRISTIAN ERA

		(Zechariah)
4 B.C.-100 A.D.	*JESUS CHRIST (Eisa)*	*JOHN THE BAPTIST (Yahya)*

THE DAWN OF ISLAM

570-632 (Muhammad)

Start of Islam
Pious Caliphate
The Umayyad Caliphate
The Abbasid Caliphate
The Fatimid Caliphate
The Ottomon Empire
Political & Religious Decline of Islam

THE REVIVAL OF ISLAM

1835-1908 (Mirza Ghulam Ahmad)

Founding of Ahmadiyya Khilafat

(iii) The Mosaic Period

The period of Israilites' slavery ended with their exodus from Egypt to the land of Canaan, under the guidance of Moses. Moses is the most majestic of the Old Testament figures and his influence on the history of the Israelites was immense. The Torah or the first five books of the Old Testament are also known as the Books of Moses. And the Law that Moses gave to the Israelites is known to this day as the Mosaic Law.

The story of Moses is also narrated in the Quran in some detail. Moses was born among the Israelites who were being persecuted by the Pharaoh, Ramses II. His mother, in fear of his execution at the hands of the Pharaoh's soldiers, placed him in a reed basket and set it afloat in the River Nile. The Pharaoh's wife spotted the floating basket and after discovering the infant inside, decided to adopt him. Moses thus grew up in the palace of the Pharaoh. When Moses was commissioned as a prophet, he told the ruling Pharaoh, Merneptah, to believe in One God. The Pharaoh not only disbelieved but decided to punish Moses and the rest of the Israelites. Moses, under Divine command, led the Israelites out of Egypt towards the Promised Land.

For the next forty years after leaving Egypt, the Israelites moved from place to place in the Sinai Peninsula, never settling down in any one location for long. This period in the Israelite history is known as the "Wanderings in the Desert". Finally, the Israelites reached the Canaan area which was the land promised to them. Moses, however, died before crossing the River Jordan and the Israelites entered their new homeland under the leadership of Joshua.

Another prophet who was a contemporary of Moses was Shuaib (Jethro of the Bible). Shuaib lived in a place called Midian where Moses came and spent some years. Shuaib was also Moses' father-in-law.

(iv) The Kingdom Prophets

For a long time the Israelites lived in Canaan under a tribal system. Then, around 1043 B.C., Saul became the first king of Israel. Around

the same time the first prophet after the Mosaic period was raised among the Israelites. This prophet was named Samuel. Two of the Old Testament Books, Samuel-1 and Samuel-2, are named after him.

After Samuel came David, the first prophet-king of the Israelites. David consolidated the Israelite kingdom by uniting the various Israelite tribes and also extended its borders. Two other porphets, Gad and Nathan, were contemporaries of David and used to advise him on important matters. David's son, Solomon, was another prophet-king who was very famous for his wisdom and justice. It was Solomon who built the Temple at Jerusalem towards which the Muslims used to face during their Prayers, before the commandment came down to face the Ka'ba.

The six-hundred year period starting from the Prophet Samuel has been named the Kingdom period since it was the first time in history that the Israelites had a kingdom of their own and exercised dominion over their own lands. Israel thus became a state ruled by a hereditary king who in turn was bound by the law of the Torah and God's Covenant with the chosen people. From a religious point of view, this six-hundred year period was the most glorious in the Israelite history when many prophets were raised among them, one after the other. In fact it would not be an exaggeration to call this period "the Age of Prophets". There was hardly anytime during this period when the Israelites did not have a prophet among them.

The newly established monarchy in Israel, however, did not last very long. There were strong rivalries between the northern and southern Jewish clans which eventually shattered this fragile alliance. At the death of the Prophet Solomon, therefore, the United Kingdom of Israel broke up into two separate kingdoms: the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah. The Northern Kingdom of Israel lasted until 722 B.C. when its capital, Samaria, fell to the conquering Assyrians. The Southern Kingdom of Judah lasted until 586 B.C. when its capital, Jerusalem, fell to the conquering Babylonians.

During this six-hundred year Kingdom period, more than thirty prophets were raised among the Israelites including such well known names as Elijah (Elias), Elisha (Yasaa), Jonah (Yunus), Daniel (Daniyal), Ezekiel (Dhul-Kifl), Job (Ayub), and Ezra (Uzair). Of all

the Old Testament characters, none has been kept more alive in people's imagination than Prophet Elijah. He is described in the Scriptures as appearing mysteriously from an unknown background, fighting as a soldier in the way of God, helping the downtrodden, performing many miracles, and is said to have vanished up into the heavens in a blazing chariot. By Jewish tradition, Elijah is still alive and will reappear one day to usher in the Messiah and the final deliverer of mankind.

Malachi was the last of the Israelite prophets and with his death the Old Testament comes to a close. The Jews today do not believe in any prophet after Malachi who died around 415 B.C.

(v) The Christian Era

The four-hundred year interval between the death of Malachi and the birth of Jesus Christ is known in history as the "Silent Years". During this period no prophets are known to have come in the Israelite areas. The silent years came to an end with the appearance of two prophets: John the Baptist and Jesus Christ.

John the Baptist was born about the same time as Jesus Christ and his mission was to tell the people that a great prophet, the Messiah, was soon to be raised among them. John the Baptist was eventually imprisoned by King Herod for denouncing his marriage to his brother's wife, Herodias. Later on, John the Baptist was beheaded at the request of Herodias. John the Baptist is the only known Israelite prophet who died at the hands of his enemies.

From the Holy Quran it appears that Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, was also a prophet who was given the glad tidings of the birth of his son in advance. In the Bible, however, this Zechariah is only a priest and the Prophet Zechariah is the one who lived in the fifth century before Christ.

Jesus Christ was born among the Israelites and the New Testament traces his ancestry to Prophet David. His given name was Isa and his title, ***al-Masih*** meaning "The Anointed". The name Jesus Christ is the Greek rendering of his Hebrew name "Isa al-Masih".

Although Jesus Christ's teachings were essentially the same as the

Old Testament's, the Jews of his time rejected his claim to prophethood. This was because the Jews were still waiting for the second coming of Elijah, as promised by Malachi in the Old Testament. Jesus started his mission when he was about thirty years old. By the time he was about thirty-three, the opposition to his mission by the Jews and the Romans reached such an extent that he was put on the cross.

Of all the prophets in history, the life of Jesus Christ is perhaps the most controversial. There are four distinct beliefs today regarding his crucifixion and what happened to him afterwards:

(a) The Jews believe that Jesus died on the cross and, therefore, was not a true prophet because, according to the Bible, one who is crucified is accursed by God.

(b) The Christians of today believe that Jesus died on the cross and that his corpse was placed in a tomb. But after some time he was resurrected, visited his disciples on a few occasions and, soon afterwards, ascended to heaven. The Christians still await the second coming of Jesus Christ.

(c) The traditional belief of the majority of Muslims has been that Jesus was not put on the cross at all, and that someone else resembling Jesus was crucified in his place. Jesus, instead, is supposed to have been raised to heaven, body and soul. The majority of Sunni Muslims also await the second coming of Jesus Christ.

(d) The belief of Ahmadi Muslims, based on the Bible and other historical evidence, is that Jesus was indeed put on the cross but only for a few hours. He was then taken down while still alive and hidden in a tomb by his followers. After fully recovering from his wounds, Jesus left the Palestine area moving eastward to Afghanistan and eventually to Kashmir. He is said to have died in Sri Nagar, the present capital of Kashmir, where his grave exists to this day. The Holy Quran mentions of his death in verse 5:117 and of his migration to an elevated place in verse 23:51.

It should be remembered that Jesus Christ did not intend to found a new religion and told his followers that the Mosaic Law still applied to them. He, however, impressed upon the people to acquire certain qualities such as charity, forgiveness, humility and a special love for God, which were fast becoming extinct among the Israelites. The

Christianity of today, with beliefs in the Trinity and the Eternal Sin, owes its origin to later developments and cannot be attributed to the teachings of Jesus Christ.

(vi) The Dawn of Islam

Prophet Muhammad came some six-hundred years after Jesus Christ, with no other prophet appearing in this interval. A detailed account of Prophet Muhammad's life is given in Section-3 of this book.

A majority of the Muslims, not including the Ahmadi Muslims, believe that no more prophets can come after the Prophet Muhammad who, according to them, was chronologically the Last Prophet. In the view of Ahmadi Muslims, the door to prophethood is always open. However, new prophets can only come within the fold of Islam and as followers of the Prophet Muhammad.

(vii) The Revival of Islam

In the Tradition of Prophet Muhammad, there are sayings regardingthe coming of a latter-day Messiah who will strive against the unbelievers and will re-establish the glory of Islam. Prophet Muhammad referred to this latter-day Messiah as a "prophet". In the late 1800s, a man from Qadian, India, by the name of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, claimed to be that Promised Messiah. He received many revelations from God, cleansed the Islam of the day of all superstitious beliefs and bad customs, re-emphasized man's relationship with God and threw a challenge to the whole world that his mission will succeed despite all opposition.

We will read a detailed account of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's life in Section-5 on the the history of Ahmadiyyat.

(viii) The Prophets of Other Religions

So far we have talked only about the prophets of the Bible and the Quran. What about the prophets of other religions and nations? According to the Quran, God has sent His messengers to every nation:

"There is not a people but a warner has gone among them" (35:25)

"For every nation there is a messenger" (10:48)

The Muslims, therefore, believe that earlier religions were also founded by God's messengers. Their teachings, however, were corrupted by their followers over the course of time. Below are given the names of some of the founders of other religions who could be equated to the prophets of the Quran and the Bible.

Lukman: mentioned in the Quran by name but his territory is unknown. According to some scholars he was the Greek "Aesop" while according to others he was a prophet in Abyssinia. Lukman does not correspond to any Biblical prophet.

Zoroaster The founder of Zoroastrianism, an ancient religion of Iran. Zoroaster's period is roughly placed at around 1500 B.C.

Krishna Ram Chandar Krishna is known among the Hindus as an "Avatar" or a manifestation of God. It appears that both Krishna and Ram Chandar were the Hindu equivalent of the Quranic nabis. They, however, were not the founders of the Hindu religion.

Mahavira Founder of Jainism, Mahavira lived in India in the sixth century B.C. He tried to abolish the caste system that existed in Hinduism.

Buddha Sidharta Gautama Buddha was the founder of the Buddhist faith. He lived in India in the sixth centuryB.C. The word Buddha means *the Enlightened One.*

Confucius: Founder of Confucianism, a Chinese religion. Confucius lived in China in the fifth century B.C. His teachings placed great emphasis on social ethics.

Lao-Tze: The founder of the Tao religion of China who lived in the sixth century B.C.

4. BELIEF IN THE REVEALED BOOKS

The Muslims not only believe in all the earlier prophets but also in the revelations and Scriptures given to those prophets by God. In the Quran itself, reference is made to five revealed books:

SUHAF	(Scrolls) of Abraham (87:20)
TAURAT	(Torah) of Moses (3:4; 5: 45)
ZABUR	(Pslams) of David (4:164)
INJEEL	(Gospel) of Jesus Christ, and (5:47)
QURAN	of Prophet Muhammad (6:20)

Except for the Quran, none of the revealed books were recorded during the lifetime of their respective prophets. The accuracy and authenticity of these books, therefore, is questionable.

Of the ***Scriptures of Abraham,*** nothing is known today. To begin with, these scriptures were probably never recorded in writing. Secondly, the followers of Abraham eventually adopted the teachings of Moses and the original Abrahamic teachings and scriptures got amalgamated in the Old Testament.

The ***Taurat*** or Torah of Moses comprises the first five books of the Hebrew Bible and contains the complete Law for the Israelites. These five books are:

Genesis, Exodus, Leveticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy

Together, these five books are known as the Pentateuch. The Torah was passed down the generations by the word of mouth until it was written down some hundreds of years after Moses. The Hebrew Bible is a collection of 24 books, including the five books of the Torah.

Very little is known today of ***Zabur,*** or the revelations of Prophet David. In the Hebrew Bible there are many psalms (sacred songs or hymns) attributed to David which may constitute part of the Zabur.

The ***Injeel*** or Gospel was revealed to the Prophet Jesus but was not recorded during his lifetime. After the death of Jesus Christ, attempts were made to record his teachings in writing. Of the many such narratives, four were selected by the early Church as official accounts of the teachings of Jesus. These four versions of the Gospel are known today as:

Gospel according to Matthew
Gospel according to Luke
Gospel according to Mark
Gospel according to John

The Gospels are only part of the Christian Bible which consists of the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament is the Christian rendering of the Hebrew Bible but arranged in a somewhat different order than the Hebrew Scriptures. The Roman Catholic version of the Old Testament contains 39 books. It is noteworthy that the Bible of the Christians includes Scriptures of another religion, Judaism. This has been the case since the early days of Christianity.

The New Testament is the second part of the Christian Bible and contains the Gospels and other sacred literature of Christian origin. There are 27 books in the New Testament, including the four Gospels. If classified according to subject matter, the New Testament writings could be grouped into three categories: the Gospels which give accounts of the life of Jesus, the Acts which describe the origins of the Church, and the Letters which represent the beginnings of Christian theology.

The ***Quran*** of the Prophet Muhammad is the last of the revealed Books. The recording of the Quran was started during the life of the Prophet Muhammad and within twenty years of his death, authenticated texts of the Holy Quran were distributed in the entire Islamic world. From the point of view of authenticity, therefore, none of the other revealed books come even close to the Quran.

At this point, we will mention some of the sacred books of other religions. These books, however, are not mentioned in the Quran or the Bible:

AVESTA	Scriptures of Zoroastrianism
VEDAS	Scriptures of Hinduism
PALI, TRIPITAKA	Scriptures of Buddhism
SIDDHANTA, ANGAS	Scriptures of Jainism
TAO TE K'ING	Sacred book of Taoism
K'INGS, LUN YU	Sacred books of Confucianism
KOJOKI, NIHONGI	Sacred books of Shinto faith

5. BELIEF IN THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

After belief in One God, belief in the Day of Judgment is the most emphasized doctrine in the Quran. No other revealed book draws such a vivid picture of the Day of Judgment as does the Holy Quran. According to the Quran, on the Day of Judgment this entire universe

will come to an end. Then the dead will be resurrected and accounts taken of their deeds. People with good records will be rewarded and welcomed into heaven while those with bad records will be punished and cast into hell. The concept of hell in Islam is more of a reformatory, where people will spend limited time before eventually entering heaven, which will last for ever. The Day of Judgment is referred to by many names in the Quran, some of which are mentioned below:

yaum ad-din	the Day of Judgment
yaum al-akhir	the Last Day
yaum al-qiyama	the Day of Resurrection
yaum al-fasl	the Day of Distinction
yaum al-jami	the Day of Gathering
yaum al-talaqi	the Day of the Meeting
as-sa'at	the Hour (of Doom)
al-qariah	the Calamity

In the Quran are given many signs of the coming of the Hour but its exact timing is known only to God. Following is a description of the Day of Judgment taken from Surah al-Qariah, the 101st Chapter of the Holly Quran:

The Great Calamity; What a Great Calamity!
And what should make thee know what the Great Calamity is?
The day when men will be like scattered moths;
And mountains will be like carded wool;
Then as for him whose scales are heavy,
He will have a pleasant life.
But as for him whose scales are light,
He will have hell as his resort. (101:2-10)

6. OTHER IMPORTANT BELIEFS OF MUSLIMS

We have covered in detail the five fundmental beliefs in Islam. There are, however, many other beliefs which are also very important in Islam. We will mention a few of these below:

(vi) A Muslim believes in ***taqdir*** or the Divine Decree. In Islamic philosophy taqdir, or God's decree, controls the eventual outcome of all actions in this universe.

(vii) A Muslim believes that every person is born innocent and free from sin. Sin is a conscious breach of some ordinance of God brought

to one's attention by the Prophet, or by one's own intellect, a God-given faculty. Only when a person reaches maturity of understanding and can distinguish between right and wrong, does he become accountable for his actions.

(viii) A Muslim believes that God does not hold anyone responsible unless He has shown him the right way. This is the reason why God has sent so many messengers and revelations. God always sends His guidance and warning before inflicting His punishment on people.

(ix) A Muslim believes that faith is not meaningful if it is followed blindly, without reasoning or understanding. A person should use his powers of reasoning and reflect upon God's teachings.

(x) A Muslim believes that every person is responsible for his own deeds and that no one carries the burden of another. On the Day of Judgment, no intercession will be accepted on behalf of another and each soul will be rewarded according to what it had earned.

(xi) A Muslim believes that all prophets were sent by God and that no distinction should be made among them in this respect.

B. ISLAMIC ACTS OF WORSHIP

We have read earlier that Islam requires its followers not only to believe in certain things but also to carry out certain duties. In the present section we will deal with those duties that relate to the worship of God.

Worship of God, in some form or another, is common to all religions of the world. The purpose of worshiping God in Islam is to evoke His help and guidance in leading a purposeful life in this world, and to acquire His attributes.

When we praise a thing, we wish to acquire it and appreciate its attributes. Praising God is appreciating His attributes and awakening a desire to acquire them. To be merciful when the situation demands, to be firm when the situation requires. The Holy Prophet said, "Create in yourselves the attributes of God". Mere recitation of God's praise by the tongue, therefore, is not sufficient.

In the broader sense of the word, worship is obeying God. The

various ritualistic worships described below are nothing but means of training the soul and disciplining one's self. The five fundamental acts of worship in Islam are:

1. Declaration of Faith
2. Prayer
3. Fasting
4. Pilgrimage
5. Zakat

Now, one by one, we will study these various acts of worship.

1. DECLARATION OF FAITH

The first step towards the implementation of faith in Islam is to declare it. The declaration of faith or ***Kalima*** carries in its two short sentences the assence of Islam:

لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ

la ilaha illallaho Muhammad-ur rasulullah

"There is none worthy of worship except God;
Muhammad is the Messenger of God"

In the early days of Islam, the reciting of this *Kalima* marked the act of conversion to the new faith.

2. PRAYER

There are two kinds of prayers in Islam: ***Du'a*** or the Silent Prayer, invoking God's help, and ***Salat*** or the ritualistic Prayer. In this section we will deal mainly with the *Salat*.

The performing of the *Salat* was the first duty enjoined upon the Holy Prophet and the keeping up of Prayer is the most frequently repeated injunction in the Holy Quran.

In Islam, no one day is set aside exclusively for Prayer such as the Sabbath (Saturday) for the Jews and Sunday for the Christians. For Muslims, Prayer is made part of everyday life. There is a Prayer in the

morning before sunrise; another just after midday; a third in the afternoon; a fourth at sunset; and a fifth later in the evening. The names of these five Daily Prayers are as follows:

Fajr Prayer	in the morning before sunrise
Zuhr Prayer	in the early afternoon
Asr Prayer	in the late afternoon
Maghrib Prayer	just after sunset
Isha Prayer	later in the evening

There are certain times during the day when the performing of the *Salat* is prohibited. These are:

- when the sun is rising
- when the sun is directly overhead, and
- when the sun is setting

The reason for this prohibition is that there are some people in the world who worship the sun and these times happen to be important in the daily cycle of the sun.

Each Daily Prayer comprises some obligatory and some non-obligatory prayers, as follows:

Fardh Prayer: these are obligatory upon all Muslims

Sunnah Prayer: although not obligatory, these Prayers were regularly offered by the Holy Prophet and, therefore, should be performed by the Muslims

Nafl Prayer: these Prayers are completely voluntary

Each Prayer starts with the standing position and includes bowing, prostration and sitting postures. Together, these four postures constitute a ***Raka'at.*** The various Daily Prayers comprise two, three or four raka'ats as shown below:

	Sunnah	Fardh	Sunnah	Vitr
Fajr Prayer	2	2		
Zuhr Prayer	4	4	2	
Asr Prayer		4		
Maghrib Prayer		3	2	
Isha Prayer		4	2	3

In addition to the five Daily Prayers, Muslims are exhorted in the Holy Quran to get up in the middle of the night to offer the ***Tahajjud*** Prayer. It is a non-obligatory Prayer and is offered in four units of two raka'ats each.

The Muslims are enjoined to offer all Daily Prayers in congregation as far as possible. On every Friday, there is a special congregational Prayer called the ***Juma Prayer*** which is performed in place of the Zuhr Prayer. On this occasion the prayer is led by an *Imam* who also delivers a ***Khutba*** or sermon before the Prayer.

During their Prayers, the Muslims are enjoined to face the Ka'ba. The direction of Ka'ba from any given place is known as the ***Qiblah.*** In the early days of Islam, Muslims used to face the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem. Later on, Prophet Muhammad received the revelation in which he was commanded by God to face the Ka'ba, which then became the Qiblah of the Muslims.

Besides the five Daily Prayers and the Juma Prayer on Friday, there are other Prayers in Islam which are performed at special occasions:

Salat ul Eid: (Eid Prayer)	performed at the occasion of Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha
Salat ul Kasoof: (Eclipse Prayer)	performed on the occasion of solar and lunar eclipses
Salat ul Istisqa: (Prayer for rain)	performed when the need for rain is extreme
Salat ul Janaza: (Funeral Prayer)	part of the funeral services for the deceased

ADHAN OR THE CALL TO PRAYER

Before each congregational Daily Prayer, the ***muezzin*** calls the believers to Prayer:

"God is Great (x 4)
I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except God (x 2)
I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of God (x 2)
Come to Prayer (x 2)

Come to prosperity (x 2)
God is Great (x 2)
There is none worthy of worship except God" (x 1)

In the morning azan, before the Fajr Prayer, one additional phrase is added after the words *"Come to prosperity":*

"The Prayer is better than sleep" (x 2)

WUDHU OR ABLUTION

Before offering the *Salat*, a Muslim is enjoined to perform ***wudhu*** which is an act of cleansing the body and the soul. It is only in this purified state of mind and body that true worship can be performed.

The ablution involves washing the hands three times, rinsing the mouth and the nose three times, washing the face and the right and left forearms three times, passing wet hands over the head, ears and neck and then finally, washing the right and left foot three times.

If one is unable to find clean water, ***tayammam*** may be performed in the place of *wudhu*. The *tayammam* is performed by lightly putting one's hands on some clean dust and wiping the face and forearms in a symbolic act of ablution.

ETIQUETTES OF PRAYER

In the performance of the Prayer, certain etiquettes must be observed:

- one must walk calmly and gracefully towards the mosque; one should not run even if the Prayer has started
- in a congregational Prayer, the first ranks should be filled in first
- one must concentrate on the Prayer and try not to get distracted.
- one must follow the Imam (the person leading the Prayer) in all his movements
- if one joins the Prayer in the middle, one should follow the Imam till the two "salams" have been said and then get up and complete the missed raka'ats
- if possible, one should avoid passing in front of a person who is saying his Prayer

THE TRANSLATION OF THE PRAYER

Transliteration	Translation
Allaho Akbar	God is Great
Qiyam or standing upright	
Subhana kalla humma	Holy art Thou O God
wa bihamdeka	and all praise is Thine
wa tabarakasmuka	and Blessed is Thy Name
wa ta'ala jaddoka	and exalted is Thy state
wa la ilaha ghairoka	and there is none worthy of worship except Thee
Au'ouzo billahi	I seek refuge with God
min-ash-shaitani-r-rajeem	from Satan the accursed
Bismillahi-r-Rahmanir Raheem	In the name of God, the Gracious, the Merciful
Alhamdo lillahi	All praise belongs to God
rabbil A'lameen	Lord of the worlds
Ar-Rahmanir Raheem	The Gracious, the Merciful
Malike yaumiddin	Master of the Day of Judgment
Iyyaka na'budu	Thee alone do we worship
wa Iyyaka nasta'een	and Thee alone do we ask for help
Ihdinas-siratal mustaqeem	Guide us in the straight path
Siratal-lazeena	the path of those upon whom
an'amta alaihim	Thou bestowed Thy blessings
Ghairil maghzubi alaihim	not of those who incurred Thy wrath
wa lazzaalin (Ameen).	nor of those who have gone astray (Amen).
Bismillahi-r-Rahmanir Raheem	In the name of God, the Gracious, the Merciful
Qul howallaho Ahad	Say, He is God, the One
Allahus-Samad	God, the Everlasting
Lam ya-lid	He begets not
wa lam yoo-lad	nor is He begotten
wa lam ya-kullahu	and there is none
kufuwan ahad.	like unto Him

Ruku or Bowing

Subhana Rabbi yal Azeem (said three times)	Holy is my Lord, the Great

Standing upright again

Sami Allaho liman hamidah	God hears him who praises Him
Rabbana walakal hamd	Our Lord, all praise is Thine

Sajdah or Prostration

Subhana Rabbi yal A'la (said three times)	Holy is my Lord, the Most High

Sitting Posture

Allahuma-ghfirli	O God, forgive me
war hamni	and have mercy on me
wahdini	and guide me
wa aafini	and grant me security
war fa'ni	and raise me up
waj burni	and make good my shortcomings
war zuqni.	and provide for me

Second Sajdah

Subhana Rabbi yal A'la	Holy is my Lord, the Most High

Second Sitting Posture (second and the last raka'at)

Attahiyyato lillahi	All salutations are due to God
was-salawato	and all Prayers
wa-tayyibato	and all things pure
As-salamo alaika	Peace be upon thee,
ayyo han-nabiyyo	O Prophet
wa rahmatullahi	and the mercy of God
wa barakatuhu	and His blessings
As-salamo alaina	And peace be upon us
wa ala ibadillahis saliheen.	and on all righteous servants of God
Ash-hado	I bear witness
alla ilaha illallaho	that there is none worthy of worship except God
wa ash-hado anna	and I bear witness that
Muhammadan	Muhammad
abdohu wa rasuloh.	is His Servant and Messenger

Allahuma salli ala Muhammadin	O God, bless Muhammad
wa ala a'li Muhammadin	and the people of Muhammad
kama sallaita ala Ibrahima	as Thou blessed Abraham
wa ala a'li Ibrahima	and the people of Abraham
inna ka	Thou art indeed
Hameedun Majeed.	the Praiseworthy, the Exalted
Allahuma barik ala Muhammadin	O God, bless Muhammad
wa ala a'li Muhammadin	and the people of Muhammad
kama barakta ala Ibrahima	as Thou blessed Abraham
wa ala a'li Ibrahima	and the people of Abraham
inna ka	Thou art indeed
Hameedun Majeed.	the Praiseworthy, the Exalted.
Rabba na atina	Our Lord, give us
fid-dunya hasanataw	in this world good things
wa fil akhirati hasanataw	and in the hereafter, good things
wa qina	and shield us
azabun-nar.	from the torment of the fire

Salutations

Assalamo alaikum	Peace be upon you
wa rahmatullah	and the mercy of God
Assalamo alaikum	Peace be upon you
wa rahmatullah	and the mercy of God.

3. FASTING

The third act of worship in Islam is the fasting during the Islamic month of Ramadhan by all able, adult Muslims. The fasting begins before daybreak and continues till sunset. During this period a Muslim does not eat or drink anything and abstains from any vulgar speech or act. Fasting in some form or another has been practiced by almost all religions. The purpose of fasting in Islam is summarized below:

- by fasting a Muslim obeys the command of God which is a justification for fasting in itself
- fasting is a mini sacrifice of one's physical needs and makes one feel better spiritually

- experience shows that other worships like *dua* and *Salat* are more enjoyable and spiritually more beneficial, when one is fasting
- it is during a fast that we find out how the hungry and poor people in this world really feel
- even on purely medical grounds, fasting is an excellent activity and a good training for the body systems

Persons who are either sick or on a journey, are exempted from the fasts of Ramadhan. They must, however, make up these fasts at another time. Those people who are chronically ill or too old to keep fasts are allowed to feed a poor man for every fast that they miss. Muslims who are not exempted as mentioned above, are required to fast for 29 or 30 days of the month of Ramadhan; the exact number of the days depends on the appearance of the moon. Fasting starts with the sighting of the new moon of *Ramadhan* and ends with the appearance of the new moon of *Shawwal.*

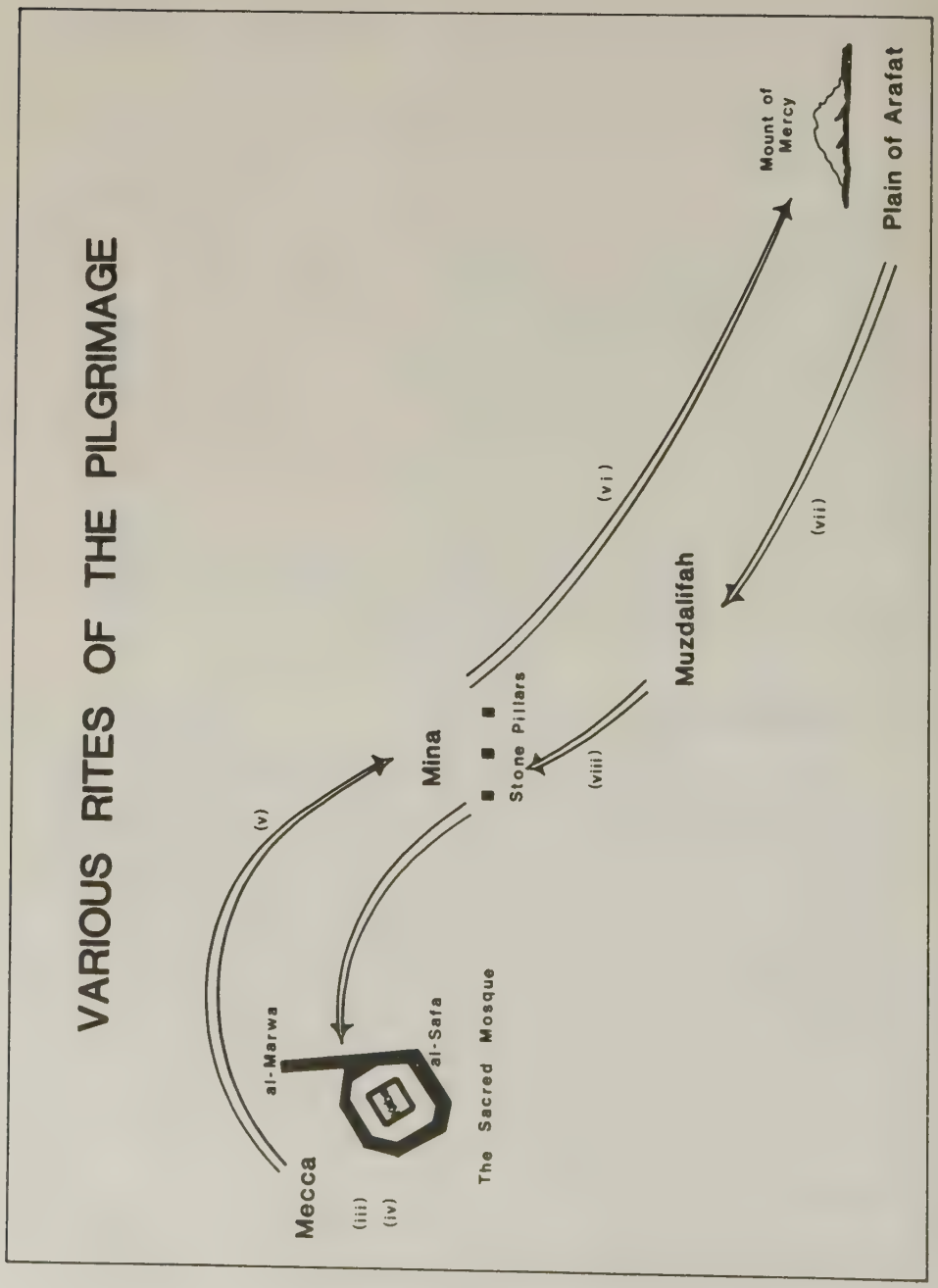
Aside from the obligatory fasts of the month of Ramadhan, a person may keep voluntary fasts at any time he wishes as long as these fasts do not interfere with his normal duties.

4. PILGRIMAGE

The fourth act of Islamic worship is the performing of the ***Hajj*** or the pilgrimage to Mecca. A Muslim must perform this pilgrimage at least once in his lifetime if economic and political conditions are favourable. The focal point of this pilgrimage is the *Ka'ba,* which was rebuilt by Prophet Abraham som 4,000 years ago. Today, the *Ka'ba* stands in the middle of a large courtyard of *Masjid al-Haram* or the Sacred Mosque. The courtyard of *Masjid al-Haram* contains, besides *Ka'ba,* the ***Maqam-e Ibrahim*** and the fountain of ***Zamzam.***

The Hajj is performed during the Muslim month of *Dhul-Hijjah* which comes two months after the festival of *Eid al-Fitr.* The various ceremonies of the Hajj include:

(i) Entering into the state of ***ihram*** by wearing only two seamless white sheets. This is done by the pilgrims when they reach certain designated places close to Mecca.


VARIOUS RITES OF THE PILGRIMAGE
Mecca
(iii)
(iv)
al-Marwa
al-Safa
The Sacred Mosque
(v)
Mina
Stone Pillars
(viii)
(vi)
Muzdalifah
(vii)
Mount of Mercy
Plain of Arafat

(ii) Saying of ***talbiyah*** starting at the place where the ihram is worn. *Talbiyah* consists of saying aloud the following:

> *"Here we come, O God, here we come*
> *No partner have You, here we come*
> *Indeed, praise and blessings are Yours, and the Kingdom too*
> *No partner have You, here we come"*

(iii) On entering Mecca, the pilgrims perform the first ***tawaf*** which consists of going around the *Ka'ba* seven times in an anti-clockwise direction.

(iv) After completing the tawaf, the pilgrims perform the ***sa'yy*** which consists of running between the two little hills of *Safa* and *Marwa* located near the *Ka'ba.* These are the two hills where Hajirah ran in search of water when Prophet Abraham had to leave her there on Divine command.

(v) After performing the *sa'yy,* the pilgrims move to *Mina,* a plain located about four miles east of Mecca, and spend the night there.

(vi) Next morning, the pilgrims leave for the Plain of *Arafat* located nine miles south-east of Mecca. They arrive there in the early afternoon, say the combined *Zuhr* and *Asr* Prayers and listen to a sermon given by the Imam. The pilgrims stay in the Plain of *Arafat* only till sunset. This is the same plain where the Prophet Muhammad delivered his farewell sermon.

(vii) After sunset the pilgrims leave *Arafat* and come to a place called *Muzdalifah.* In the Holy Quran, this place is referred to as *al-Mash'ar al-Haram,* the Sacred Monument. On reaching *Muzdalifah,* the pilgrims say their combined *Maghrib* and *Isha* Prayers and spend the night there. In the morning, after saying the *Fajr* Prayer, the pilgrims return to *Mina* once again.

(viii) The pilgrims reach *Mina* on the tenth day of *Dhul-Hijjah.* This is the busiest day of the pilgrimage. The first ceremony that is performed at *Mina* is the throwing of small stones or ***ramy al-jimar.*** In this ceremony the pilgrims throw stones at three pillars in a symbolic act of striking the devil.

(ix) The tenth day of *Dhul-Hijjah* is also the day when pilgrims sacrifice their animals. This day is also celebrated all over the Muslim world as the festive day of *Eid al-Adha.*

(x) After performing the sacrifice the pilgrims have their heads shaved or their hair clipped. After this they emerge from the state of *ihram* by wearing their everyday clothes.

(xi) Clad in their everyday clothes the pilgrims perform another *tawaf* of the *Ka'ba.* This *tawaf* is called ***tawaf-e-ziarat.***

(xii) Before the tenth day of *Dhul-Hijjah* ends, the pilgrims perform another *sa'yy* between the hills of *Safa* and *Marwa.*

(xiii) After this the pilgrims return once again to *Mina* where they stay until the twelfth or thirteenth day of *Dhul Hijjah.* During these two or three days the pilgrims continue to perform the ceremony of *ramy al-jimar* or throwing of stones.

(xiv) On the afternoon of the twelfth *Dhul-Hijjah* (or of the thirteenth) the pilgrims return to Mecca for the last ceremony of the pilgrimage. This ceremony consists of the farewell tawaf of the *Ka'ba* after which the entire pilgrimage is completed and the pilgrims are free to go wherever they wish.

Although not part of the prescribed pilgrimage, many pilgrims carry on to Medinah and visit ***Masjid al-Nabvi*** or the Prophet's Mosque. It was in the compound of this Mosque that Prophet Muhammad was buried.

While the Hajj may only be performed during the prescribed dates of the month of *Dhul-Hijjah,* a Lesser Pilgrimage called ***Umrah*** may be made individually at any time during the year.

5. ZAKAT OR PRESCRIBED ALMS

Charity towards man, in the widest sense of the word, is the cornerstone of the Islamic society and a constant theme in the Quranic teachings. There are two kinds of charities in Islam: the obligatory and the voluntary. The obligatory charity is called ***Zakat*** while the voluntary charity is called ***Sadaqah.***

The concept of Zakat was not totally new to Islam; similar alms giving had been enjoined upon the Israelites and the Christians as well. In Islam, the Zakat takes the form of a prescribed contribution based on a person's wealth and income. The rate of contribution varies with the kind of property owned but, on an average, works out to two and one half percent of the total value. The proceeds of Zakat are supposed to be devoted towards:

- relieving poverty and distress
- helping those in debt
- providing comfort and convenience for travelers
- providing stipends for scholarships
- providing ransom for prisoners of war
- propagation of Islam
- meeting the expenses for the collection of zakat
- other things beneficial for the society

Zakat, therefore, is a duty enjoined by God in the interest of the society as a whole. While on one hand these charitable contributions provide for the needs of the society, on the other hand the act of giving in the name of God purifies the heart of the contributor from selfishness and greed.

C. CODES FOR SOCIAL AND MORAL BEHAVIOR

So far, we have looked at Islamic beliefs and acts of worship, both of which deal with man's relationship with God. Now we come to social and moral codes in Islam which relate to man's conduct with fellow human beings. These codes are based on the teachings of the Quran and the Tradition of the Prophet Muhammad and must be followed by all Muslims for the establishment of a proper social structure.

The underlying principle in Islam for all social behaviour is the love for fellow human beings and service to humanity. In God's revelations to the Prophet Muhammad, as much emphasis was laid on service to humanity as on the worship of God, perhaps more on the former. In the eyes of God, Prayer is completely meaningless if it is not accompanied by service to humanity.

In the following pages we will talk about the various institutions and Commandments that exist in Islam for regulating the social and moral behaviour of Muslims.

SADAQAH

While Zakat is an obligatory charity enjoined upon all Muslims, the voluntary charity is called Sadaqah. This is given to the needy for the purpose of gaining God's pleasure. It must, therefore, be free from show, ulterior motives, personal gain or putting the recipient under any obligation.

Charity of any kind should be given out of good things and not out of improperly acquired wealth nor from items that were useless and were going to be discarded anyway. This voluntary charity is not limited to fellow Muslims; if needy non-Muslims exist in the society, they should be given a share.

LOOKING AFTER THE ORPHANS, THE WAYFARER, THE NEIGHBOUR AND THE POOR

Great emphasis is laid in Islam on looking after the orphans. Muslims are enjoined to keep the properties of the orphans in trust and to hand them over when the orphans are mature enough to take care of the properties themselves.

Similarly, Muslims are enjoined to look after the needs of the wayfarer and the neighbour. Islam does not favour the idea of looking after one's own needs and requirements only. In Islam, an individual is part of a social whole and is urged to share his or her good fortune with other fellow beings.

DISCHARGING OF TRUSTS

Great stress has been laid in Islam on honouring agreements and trusts. Muslims are enjoined to fulfill all covenants, whether they be with God or with fellow man. Islam teaches great respect for the law, both religious and social. The Holy Prophet and his Companions always stood firmly by their agreements and treaties even under the

most trying conditions. There was not a single instance when they broke their pacts with any other nation or group.

The trusts and agreements can take a variety of forms. They may include treaties or pacts between nations, or the trust that an employer places in his employee to look after the business, or the trust that is implicit in all marriage contracts, or business transactions that may be carried out between two parties, or the trust which the electors place in their nominees. These are all trusts that must be discharged honestly.

TRUTHFULNESS

History tells us that even the bitterest enemies of the Holy Prophet, peace be on him, acknowledged his truthfulness and called him *as-Sadiq* and *al-Amin*. Being so truthful and honest himself, he laid great emphasis on truth as the basis of a high moral character. The Quran also mentions truthfulness as the most prominent quality of a Muslim.

A Muslim always speaks the truth even if it goes against his own interests or the interests of his relatives or friends. Giving of false testimony, therefore, is strongly prohibited in Islam.

CARRYING OUT OF JUSTICE

In Islam all people, whether rich or poor, strong or weak, men or women, have equal rights. Islam strongly forbids the violation of anyone's rights and enjoins all Muslims to carry out justice. In the discharging of justice, no special favours are to be granted to either party and bonds of friendship or kinship are not allowed to influence one's decision.

KINDNESS TO PARENTS AND CHILDREN

In the moral code of Islam, kindness to parents occupies a very high position. Complete obedience to parents is enjoined upon Muslims as long as this does not conflict with one's duty to God. Similarly, parents and elders are urged to show mercy to the young. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said:

> *"He is not one of us who does not show mercy to our young ones and respect to our elders"*

The Holy Prophet was fond of children and always wanted the Muslims to excel among other communities in showing kindness to children. It is also a charity in the eyes of God to attend to the children's educational needs, spiritual welfare and their general well-being.

DUTY TO ANIMALS

While the rights of fellow man are indeed paramount, the religion of Islam does not ignore the rights of the animal kingdom. A verse of the Holy Quran clearly draws one's attention to this fact:

> *"There is not an animal on the earth, nor a bird that flies on its two wings, but they are communities like you"* (6: 39)

Man, therefore must treat all animals with great kindness and compassion. Man employs many animals for his own use and even eats their meat. In Islam, the beasts of burden and animals used for riding or ploughing the fields must not be over-worked or pushed beyond their normal limits of endurance. Similarly, animals that make up the human diet should be killed or slaughtered in the most humane manner.

PROHIBTION FROM SOCIAL VICES

So far we have studied various codes of conduct which promote good social relations and fulfill the general requirements of an Islamic society. Now we come to some restrictive regualtions, the purpose of which is to keep certain vices from corrupting the society. These regulations relate to certain foods and drinks, gambling and the taking of usury.

FOODS

There are four things the eating of which is forbidden to a Muslim. These are:

- that which dies of itself
- blood
- pork

- that which has been slaughtered in the name of anyone other than God.

Animals that die of themselves are not fit to be eaten because they may be diseased or rotting. Eating of blood is prohibited on the grounds that it is a sign of barbarity and primitiveness. Pork is forbidden on the grounds that its meat carries many diseases. Eating of the last mentioned item is prohibited on spiritual grounds. It is not proper for a Muslim to be eating something on which the name of someone other than God has been invoked. At the time of the Holy Prophet, and in some places even today, it was a common practice to prepare foods as offerings to various gods. Muslims are forbidden to eat such foods.

Except for the four things mentioned above, Muslims are allowed to eat everything that is clean, pure and agreeable.

DRINKS

Dinking of intoxicating liquors was prevalent among the Arabs at the time of the Holy Prophet. The prohibition against their consumption came gradually. First the Muslims were told by God that the intoxicating drinks contain more harm than good. Then they were commanded not to say their Prayers if they were intoxicated. Finally came the commandment to shun this uncleanliness altogether. Muslims, therefore, are not permitted to consume alcoholic drinks.

Gambling

Gambling and other games of chance are also prohibited in Islam. According to the Quran, these things carry little good and more harm. A Muslim, therefore, avoids indulging in such activities.

Taking Of Interest

Taking of interest goes against the Islamic principle of charity and is, therefore, prohibited. In the Islamic philosophy, a borrower who is already in hardship, should not be expected to repay an additional sum as interest. A lender should only take his original loan back or, better

still, forgive it if he can afford to do so.

PENAL LAWS IN ISLAM AND PUNISHMENTS

Besides enjoining voluntary acts of righteousness, Islam contains penal codes to deal with gross violations of social trust. In Islam it is strictly prohibited to violate the life, property or honour of another person. According to the many Commandments of the Holy Quran and the various Tradition of the Holy Prophet, the above three things are made sacred for the Muslims and are not to be violated. The willful violation of these limits placed in Islam could be punishable by the society.

JIHAD

The Islamic institution of ***Jihad*** is the least understood and the most talked about aspect of Islam in the world today. There is great misunderstanding among the non-Muslims that Islamic Jihad is a *holy war* directed towards the unbelievers for the sole purpose of converting them into Muslims. Nothing, in fact, could be farther from the truth.

Literally, the Arabic word *jihad* means "utmost effort" or "striving". The Muslims are commanded in the Holy Quran to strive in the way of God. This struggle could be in the form of propagation, promotion or defense of Islam and may or may not include armed conflict with the unbelievers. In Islamic terminology the effort to preach Islam to non-Muslims and the struggle to overcome one's baser inclinations and desires are all called jihad. If the struggle does indeed take the form of an armed conflict, it must be in self defense and in accordance with all the rules and regulations laid down in the Quran.

For a long time the early Muslims suffered persecution and torture at the hands of the Quraysh. The Holy Prophet and the Muslims never retaliated, simply because there were no commands from God to this effect. Finally, when persecution had reached its peak, permission to fight in self defense was granted to the Muslims. However, the purpose of fighting was limited to establishing freedom of worship and removing oppression and iniquity. Muslims were strongly enjoined to spare the lives of women and children, to treat the prisoners of war

with kindness, to restrain at all times from any excesses, and to restore peace as soon as possible. This is the true concept of jihad in Islam.

ISLAMIC MANNERS AND ETIQUETTES

There are certain manners and etiquettes that a Muslim follows when conducting his affairs in the society. Following are some examples:

- When two Muslims meet, they greet each other by saying ***Assalam-alaikum,*** meaning "peace be upon you", and ***Wa alaikumus-salam,*** and "upon you be peace".
- When Muslims undertake any activity, they always start it with the name of God, saying: ***Bismillah-ar-Rahman ar-Rahim,*** meaning: "with the name of God, the Gracious, the Merciful".
- When Muslims terminate an activity, such as the eating of one's meal, they say ***Alhamdo Lillah,*** meaning: 'praise be to God.' This phrase is said at many other occasions when expressing gratitude to God.
- When a Muslim talks about carrying out some activity in the future, he always adds the phrase ***Insha-Allah,*** meaning: 'if God be willing.'
- When a Muslim receives a favour or a gift he thanks the person by saying ***jeza-kallah*** meaning: 'may God reward you.'
- When a Muslim hears a sad news, particularly of someone passing away, he says ***Inna lillah-e wa inna ilaih-e rajiyun,*** meaning: 'we belong to God, and unto Him shall we return.'
- When a person sneezes, he says ***Alhamdo Lillah,***—praise be to God; the other person who hears him sneeze, says ***yar hamo kumullah,*** meaning: 'may God have mercy on you.'
- When a Muslim wants to enter another's home, he first greets the dwellers and then asks for permission to enter. It is prohibited to enter someone's home without his permission or knowledge.
- A Muslim does not talk evil against somebody particularly at his

back. This act of backbiting is not only impolite but also cowardly. If a genuine complaint exists against someone, it should first of all be brought to that person's own attention.

D. ISLAMIC PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

In common with other religions, Islam has a certain philosophy of life and of man's existence in this universe.

In Islam, man is created by God and made God's viceroy on earth. He is chosen for this purpose because of his eminent and unique position among God's diverse creatures. Man is chosen to establish an orderly society on this earth and to enrich his life not only with worldly pleasures but also with knowledge and spiritual delights. For the achieving of this goal, God has made the forces of nature subservient to man.

Life in Islam, therefore, is very important. Man's life, with all its potential for moral and spiritual advancements, is a true masterpiece of God's creation. Similarly, when man reaches his spiritual heights and is truly in communion with God, he represents the greatest achievement of man on earth. One's life, therefore, cannot be taken lightly.

It is apparent from what we have studied so far that the worship of God and the service to humanity occupy a prominent place in a Muslim's life. A Muslim leads a balanced life in which his relationship with his fellow beings is not sacrificed for the sake of his relationship with God, and vice versa.

But beyond the superficial, there is a deeper, more subtle purpose in life. Although worship of God and service to humanity are highly emphasized in Islam, these are just the means to achieve the real objective. The real purpose in life is to find God. This, then, is the real reward that Islam promises a believer.

A Muslim should make a clear distinction between the means and the end. All the worships we have talked about are necessary but are not the ends in themselves. All the acts of righteousness we have talked about are very good and creditable but are not the ends in themselves.

All the articles of faith we have studied are extremely important but are not the ultimate objective. These are all but the means to achieve the real objective which is God Himself. God is the real objective and all else are just the means to obtain Him. All one's efforts must be devoted towards the achieving of this specific objective. Those fortunate persons who found God, achieved their real objective in life and also the highest reward Islam has to offer in this world.

Other religions have beliefs and acts of worship and social and moral codes, as well. But the concept of God they present is of an impersonal Supreme Being Who is aloof from His creation and can only be reached through intermediaries. Islam, on the other hand, offers a very personal God with the possibility of a very personal relationship with Him. This relationship is so special that it cannot be truly likened to anything else in this world. This relaionship has the intimacy of two lifelong friends, the love of two young lovers and the affection that exists between the mother and her child. Establishment of this special relationship with God is really the true theme of the religion of Islam. This, then, is the relationship for which all worldly possessions could be given up; this, then, is the relationship for which one's life could be sacrificed.

And let me tell you something: God Is There For The Taking. He is so close to you that you cannot even imagine; and He is so eager to be befriended that you will be really surprised. All that is needed on your part is some effort to take Him. You have learned the basic outline of what you have to do: your beliefs should be correct and your convictions strong, your worship should be sincere and done with full attention, and your actions should be unselfish and based on love for humanity. You do all this, and in due course of time you will find God.

The fruits of this relationship with God will be unlimited. With God on your side you will have great confidence and you will not be afraid of anybody or anything in this world. Your prayers will be heard with great frequency; you will feel peace and contentment in your hearts; you will obtain great insights into the strange workings of this physical and spiritual universe of ours; and finally, if you are really fortunate, God may bless you with His communion. And when

that happens, you have pretty well achieved all the spiritual pleasures that you could possibly get in this life; to get more, you will have to wait for the next one.

This, very briefly, is the purpose and philosophy of life in Islam.

E. THE SOURCES OF ISLAMIC LAW

In the previous sections we have seen that the entire life of a Muslim—his beliefs, his worship and his social and moral conduct—is structured on the basis of definite rules and regulations. Now we will briefly talk about the **source** of all these codes and directives.

Basically, there are three sources from which we obtain all our Islamic laws and principles:

1. The Holy Quran
2. The Tradition (Sunnah and Hadith of the Holy Prophet)
3. Ijtihad (exercise of judgment)

1. The Holy Quran

The Quran is the real foundation on which the entire structure of Islam rests. The Quran is the absolute and the final authority in any discussion related to Islamic principles or codes. One could even say that the Quran is the only source and that the other two sources—Tradition and Ijtihad—are directly or indirectly derived from the Quranic teachings.

The Quran, however, deals with the essential. It leaves the details to the Tradition and Ijtihad. We will read more about the Holy Quran and its teachings in Section 2, and now we move on to the other two sources of Islam.

2. The Tradition

After the Holy Quran, the most important Islamic textual material is the Tradition, which includes the Sunnah and Hadith of the Holy Prophet. The Sunnah is the practice of the Holy Prophet while the Hadith is his sayings.

As the Quran deals mainly with the broad principles of Islam, the details were frequently supplied by the Holy Prophet by his actions and his sayings. Since written communication was not very common in those days, the transmission of the actions and sayings of the Holy Prophet took place from one person to another by the word of mouth. It was many years after the death of the Holy Prophet that a systematic compilation of his practices and sayings started to take place. Extreme care used to be taken in tracing a tradition back through various narrators and establishing its authenticity.

It was about two hunderd years after the Holy Prophet that the six most authentic compilations of the Tradition existing today were made. Together, these six compilations are known as the ***Siha-i Sitta*** meaning the Six Authentic Ones. The names of these books and their compilers are given below:

1. Sahih Bukhari	by Imam Ismail Bukhari	194-256 AH
2. Sahih Muslim	by Imam Muslim bin Hajjaj	204-261 AH
3. Jamia Tirmazi	by Imam Abu Isa bin Tirmazi	209-279 AH
4. Sunan Abu Daud	by Imam Abu Daud Sulaiman	202-275 AH
5. Sunan Nasai	by Ahmad bin Shuaib al-Nasai	215-306 AH
6. Sunan ibn Majah	by Abu Abdullah bin Yazid ibn Majah	209-273 AH

These six books on Tradition, classified the sayings and actions of the Holy Prophet under various subjects, and thereby made these compilations easy to use. These books are easily available today and make extremely informative and interesting reading. Of the six collections mentioned above, Sahih Bukhari holds the first place in many respects, while Sahih Muslim is generally accorded second place. Sahih Bukhari was not only the first such compilation of Tradition but has also set the standard by which the others are judged.

The early scholars of Tradition developed sound principles in the light of which the authenticity of any given hadith could be verified. These principles related to the unbroken chain of transmission, the trustworthiness of the narrators and the apparent genuineness of the text itself.

It Must be remembered that there is a clear distinction between the

Quran and the Hadith. The Quran is the Word of God. Hadith, on the other hand, is the word of the Prophet Muhammad, as narrated by various persons. Generally speaking, Muslims will follow the Hadith if it does not contradict the teachings of the Quran. If there is an apparent contradiction between the teachings of the Quran and the Hadith, then the Hadith must be considered suspect. The Holy Prophet is reported to have said, "If you find anything foolish ascirbed to me, discard it. For it is not from me".

3. Ijtihad or Exercise of Judgment

Ijtehad, or the exercise of judgment, is the third source of Islamic principles and codes. To enable you to understand the importance of Ijtihad, we will narrate an actual Hadith of the Holy Prophet:

> On being appointed Governor of Yemen, Mu'adh was asked by the Holy Prophet as to which rule would he follow. Mu'adh replied, "The law of the Quran". "But if you do not find any direction therein", asked the Prophet. "Then I will act acroding to the Sunnah of the Prophet", replied Mu'adh. "But if you do not find any direction therein", he was asked again. "Then I will exercise my judgment (ijtihad) and act on that", said Mu'adh. The Holy Prophet approved of this and prayed for Mu'adh

This is the true example of how human judgment should be used in the matter of religion. Muslims believe that the most accurate and perfect form of knowledge is that which is given to man through the process of revelation. To properly understand God's revelation, however, some human reasoning and judgment is always required. As long as the Holy Prophet was alive himslef, he provided this judgment and explained to the people many of the rules and regulations given in the Quran. After his death, the people continued to carry out this threefold approach to the Islamic principles. Whenever a problem arose, the Muslims tried to find its solution in the Quran. If it was not mentioned in the Quran, they searched the Holy Prophet's Sunnah and Hadith. Not finding the solution there either, they used their best judgment based on the general philosophy and principles of Islam. This process of using human judgment in elaborating Islamic

principles or solving problems is called Ijtihad.

THE FOUR SCHOOLS OF LAW IN ISLAM

As we discussed in the previous section, there are three main sources of Islamic law which govern and regulate all aspects of a Muslim's public and private life. These laws relate to religious worship, prohibitions, and all contracts and obligations that arise in social life such as inheritance, marriage, divorce, punishments, conduct of war and the administration of the state.

The science of these religious laws is called ***Fiqah*** and the expert in this field such as a jurist is called a ***faqih*** (plural: *fuqaha*).

We read that Ijtihad, or the exercise of judgment, is a valid source of Islamic laws in areas where the Holy Quran and the Tradition are not explicit. But the exercise of this independent judgment can only be left in the hands of proper scholars of the Holy Quran and the Tradition. The vast Majority of Muslims give this right of independent reasoning to only four ancient Muslim theologians and jurists who lived in the first three centuries of Islam. These four ***fuqaha*** are:

Imam Abu Hanifa	of Kufa
Imam Malik bin Anas	of Medinah
Imam Muhammad al-Shafi	of Medinah
Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal	of Baghdad

Although a number of other jurists also became popular during their times, only the above four are now recognized by the vast majority of Sunni Muslims. These four great jurists and theologians tried to systematize the Islamic law into a comprehensive rational system which covered all possible legal situations. The four prominent schools of Islamic law are named after their founders and are called the Hanafiyya, the Malikiyya, the Shafiyya, and the Hanbaliyya schools of religious law.

Most Muslims regard these four schools as equally valid interpretations of the religious law of Islam. These schools are in good agreement on all essential aspects of the religion of Islam. They all acknowledge the authority of the Holy Quran and the Tradition as the

ultimate sources of the Islamic law. Only in areas and situations where these two sources are silent, do the four schools use their independent reasoning in which they may differ with each other.

1. The Hanafiyya School

The earliest school formed was by Imam Abu Hanifa (699-767 A.D) of Kufa. It generally reflects the views of the jurists of Iraq. Abu Hanifa did not compose or write any books on law himself but his numerous discussions and opinions as recorded by his disciples, form the basis of this school.

As a theologian and a religious lawyer, Abu Hanifa exercised considerable influence in his time. His legal thought is very consistent, uses high degree of reasoning, avoids extremes, and lays great emphasis on the ideas of the Muslim community. The Ahmadi Muslims generally follow the Hanafiyya school of law.

Other areas in which this school has a following include Turkey, the countries of the Fertile Crescent, Lower Egypt, and India.

2. The Malikiyya School

The next school of law in order of time was the one founded by Imam Malik bin Anas (d. 795 A.D) of Medinah and reflects the views and practices associated with that city. Imam Malik served as a judge in Medinah and compiled all his decisions in a book form called *al-Muwatta* (the Levelled Path).

Like the jurists of Iraq, Imam Malik preferred to depend more on the Traditions associated with the Companions of the Holy Prophet than with the Prophet himself.

The adherents of this school are predominantly in North African countries.

3. The Shafiyya School

The third school was founded by Imam al-Shafi (d. 820 A.D.) who was a disciple of Imam Malik. Imam Shafi placed great importance on

the Traditions of the Holy Prophet and explicitly formulated the rules for establishing the Islamic law. He was a great thinker, had an unusual grasp of principles and a clear understanding of the judicial problems.

This school is strong in Lower Egypt, Syria, India and Indonesia.

4. The Hanbaliyya School

This school was founded by Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal (d. 855 A.D.) of Baghdad. Imam Hanbal did not establish a separate school himself; this was rather done by his disciples and followers.

The Hanbaliyya was the most conservative of the four schools. Its rigidity and intolerance eventually caused its decline over the years. In the eighteenth century, however, this school was revived with the rise of Wahhabism and the growing influence of the House of Sa'ud. Today Hanbaliyya school is followed only in Saudi Arabia.

The Hanbalis insist on the literal injunctions of the Quran and the Hadith and are very strict in the observance of religious duties.

Although the Muslims generally apply the Islamic law according to the principles and details laid down by the four ancient jurists, legal situations keep arising from time to time for which there are no clear answers in these early schools of law. To cope with this changing aspect of Islamic society, particularly in the light of new facts, specialists in the field of Islamic law are asked to give their decisions using the traditional tools of legal science. Such a decision is called a *fatwa* and the religious scholar who gives this decision is called a *mufti.*

THE NAMES OF ISLAMIC MONTHS

In their religious practice, Muslims follow the Islamic calendar which consists of twelve lunar months. Each month may be of 29 or 30 days. On an average there are 355 days in a lunar year. The fact that the lunar year has approximately ten days less than the solar year, brings an Islamic anniversary ten days ahead each year in the solar calendar.

Following are the names of the Islamic months. Even in pre-Islamic days, four of these months were considered sacred and no fighting was permitted during that period. These sacred months are marked by an

(S) below:

1.	Muharram (S)	The first month of the Islamic calendar
2.	Safar	
3.	Rabi-ul-Awwal	The month of the Holy Prophet's birth, Hijrah and death
4.	Rabi-ul-Akhir	
5.	Jamadi-ul-Awwal	
6.	Jamadi-ul-Akhir	
7.	Rajab (S)	
8.	Shaaban	
9.	Ramadhan	The month in which the Holy Quran started to be revealed and the month in which the Muslims fast
10.	Shawwal	On the first day of this month Eid-ul Fitr is celebrated
11.	Dhul Qadah (S)	
12.	Dhul Hijja (S)	The month in which the Hajj is performed and Eid-ul Adha is celebrated.

SECTION 2

THE HOLY QURAN

GUIDANCE FOR MANKIND

WHAT IS REVELATION

The Muslims believe that God speaks to His chosen servants through the process of revelation. It is through this process that spiritual knowledge and wisdom is given to man by God. The knowledge received through revelation is considered to be the truest form of learning.

Revelation can be of many kinds. It may comprise ordinances, laws and injunctions. It may be prophetic in nature and bring knowledge of future events. It may bring great insights into matters of material or spiritual nature. It may convey God's goodwill, pleasure and love; or it may be the medium of God's warning, displeasure and rebuke.

The nature of revelation varies according to circumstances and the spiritual station of the recipient. Muslims believe that of all revelations and divine communications, the most complete, the most perfect and the most comprehensive is the Holy Quran.

WHAT IS THE QURAN

The Quran is a compilation of the verbal revelations given to the Holy Prophet Muhammad over a period of twenty-two years. The language of the Quran is Arabic. The word ***Quran*** means something that is "read" or "recited". The diction of the Quran could be best described as poetic prose and its language is a model of linguistic purity and stylistic elegance.

The Quran is the Holy Book or the Scriptures of the Muslims. It lays down for them the law and commandments, codes for their social and moral behaviour, and contains a comprehensive religious philosophy. It is the ultimate source of the Islamic law and a complete guidance for the Muslims. Besides its proper name, the Quran is also known by the following names:

al-Kitab	The Book
al-Furqan	The Discriminant
al-Dhikr	The Exposition

al-Bayan	The Explanation
al-Burhan	The Argument
al-Haqq	The Truth
al-Tanzil	The Revelation
al-Hikmat	The Wisdom
al-Huda	The Guide
al-Hukm	The Judgment
al-Mau'izah	The Admoniton
al-Rahmat	The Mercy

Surahs And Verses

The Quran is divided into 114 Surahs or Chapters and each Chapter consists of individual Ayaat or verses. There are in total 6,348 verses in the Holy Quran. The Surahs are of varying lengths, some consisting of a few lines while others run for many pages. Surah al-Baqarah is the longest Chapter comprising 287 verses while Surah al-Kauthar is the shortest with only four verses including the ***tasmia.***

Each Surah in the Quran has a name given to it. These names are not necessarily revealed but have been introduced by scholars and editors for the sake of reference. These names are usually taken from some prominent or unusual word which occurs in the Surah.

At the beginning of each Surah, except one, stands the following invocation which is part of the Surah:

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

Bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Rahim

(In the name of God, the Gracious, the Merciful)

The one exception is Surah al-Taubah, the 9th Chapter of the Holy Quran. Many scholars view this Chapter as part of the previous one. According to the subject matter Chapters 8 and 9 are one. In Surah al-Naml, the 27th Chapter of the Holy Quran, the phrase "In the name of God, the Gracious, the Merciful" is mentioned twice: once in its usual place at the beginning of the Surah and the second time in verse 31, in reference to the opening line of Prophet Solomon's letter to Queen Sheba.

Meccan And Medinite Chapters

In the printed copies of the Quran, the title of each Surah is followed by the name of the place where the Chapter was revealed. The place names used are "Meccan" for all Surahs revealed before Hijrah (622 A.D.), and "Medinite" for all Surahs revealed after Hijrah. Many of the Surahs in the Quran are composite, and a Chapter marked Meccanmay contain some verses from the Medinite period, and vice versa.

During the twenty-two year period of the Quranic revelations, Prophet Muhammad lived in Mecca for twelve years (610-622 A.D.) and in Medinah for ten (622-632 A.D.). Of the 114 Surahs of the Holy Quran, about 92 were revealed in Mecca and 22 in Medinah. Generally speaking, there are three characteristics which distinguish Meccan Surahs from the Medinite ones:

1. The Meccan Surahs deal mainly with faith, while the Medinite Surahs deal mainly with action or the implementation of faith.
2. Meccan Surrahs are generally prophetic, while the medinite Surahs deal with the realization and fulfillment of prophecies.
3. Meccan Surahs emphasize Man's relationship with God, while Medinite Surahs emphasize man's relationship with fellow man and lay down rules and regulations for social and moral conduct.

The Arrangement Of The Quran

The arrangement of the Quran does not follow the chronological order in which the verses and the Surahs were actually revealed. Except for the short "Opening" Chapter which has been placed at the head of the Quran, the long Surahs are generally in the beginning while the short ones are generally towards the end. This is not a rigid principle as there are many exceptions to it. Because of the presence of long Surahs at the beginning of the Quran, about half the text of the entire Quran is contained in the first 18 Chapters while the other half is contained in

the next 96 Chapters. Although the Quran is not arranged in a chronological order or by subject matter, there is a certain continuity between the various Chapters. If we were to observe closely the closing lines of some Surahs and the opening lines of those immediately following these, we would detect a continuity of the underlying theme.

The First Revelation

The beginning of the Holy Quran took place in the year 610 A.D. with the first revelation received by the Holy Prophet while he was meditating on Mount Hira. The Angel Gabriel brought this revelation and made the Prophet repeat after him:

Read, in the name of thy Lord Who created
Created man from a clot of blood
Recite, for thy Lord is Most Beneficent
Who taught by the pen
Taught man what he knew not. (96:2-6)

These verses are now part of Surah al-Alaq, the 96th Chapter of the Holy Quran. This first revelation marks the beginning of the prophetic mission of Muhammad which lasted twenty-two years. No special instructions were given to the Holy Prophet at this stage. Such instructions started to come down in subsequent revelations.

The second revelation forms the beginning of *Surah al-Mudathir,* the 74th Chapter of the Holy Quran, and starts to define the Prophet's mission more clearly:

O thou covered in a mantle
Arise and deliver thy warning
And thy Lord do thou magnify
And thy garments do thou purify
And all uncleanliness do thou shun
And give not to gain more
And for thy Lord's cause, be patient (74:2-8)

The Last Revelation

The last whole Surah to be revealed is considered to be *Surah al-Nasr,* the 110th Chapter of the Holy Quran. This is a "Medinite"

Surah in the sense that it was revealed after the Hijrah. But this Chapter was actually revealed at Mecca, during the time of the Prophet's farewell pilgrimage.

The very last verses with which the Quranic revelaions came to a close however, belong to Surah al-Maidah, the 5th Chapter of the Holy Quran. These verses were also revealed during the farewell pilgrimage, immediately after the Prophet's sermon on the Mount:

> *This day have I perfected for you your religion, and completed upon you My favour, and have chosen for you Islam as religion.* (5:4)

Cryptic Letters Of The Quran

At the beginning of twenty-nine Surahs, following the invocation, stands a letter or a group of letters of the alphabet. These letters are known as ***Muqatta'at*** or abbreviations. Of the twenty-eight letters of the Arabic alphabet, fourteen have been used in this way. Below, these Muqatta'at are indicated by a bracket around the letter:

(alif)	ba	ta	tha	jim	(ha)
kha	dal	dhal	(ra)	za	(sin)
shin	(sad)	dad	(ta)	za	(ain)
ghain	fa	(qaf)	(kaf)	(lam)	(mim)
(noon)	(ha)	waw	(ya)		

The Quran has used the *Muqatta'at* in groups as well as singly, in fourteen different combinations, as under:

alif-lam-mim	alif-lam-mim-sad	alif-lam-ra
alif-lam-mim-ra	kaf-ha-ya-ain-sad	ta-ha
ta-sin-mim	ta-sin	ya-sin
sad	ha-mim-ain-sin-qaf	ha-mim
qaf	noon	

The significance and meaning of these mysterious letters is not known for sure. According to some scholars of the Quran, these letters are abbreviations of certain words. For example:

alif-lam-mim	stands for "anallaho a'lamo" (I am Allah, the Most Knowing)
alif-lam-ra	stands for "anallah al-Rai" (I am Allah, the Most Seeing)

Following is a list of all the Surahs that contain these cryptic letters:

Surah –	Name of Surah	Muqatta'at used
2	al-Baqarah	alif-lam-mim
3	Al Imran	alif-lam-mim
7	al-Araf	alif-lam-mim-sad
10	Yunus	alif-lam-ra
11	Hud	alif-lam-ra
12	Yusuf	alif-lam-ra
13	al-Ra'd	alif-lam-mim-ra
14	Ibrahim	alif-lam-ra
15	al-Hijr	alif-lam-ra
19	Maryam	kaf-ha-ya-ain-sad
20	Ta Ha	ta-ha
26	al-Shu'ara	ta-sin-mim
27	al-Namal	ta-sin
28	al-Qasas	ta-sin-mim
29	al-Ankabut	alif-lam-mim
30	al-Rum	alif-lam-mim
31	Luqman	alif-lam-mim
32	al-Sajdah	alif-lam-mim
36	Ya Sin	ya-sin
38	Sad	sad
40	al-Mumin	ha-mim
41	Ha Mim al-Sajdah	ha-mim
42	al-Shura	ha-mim-ain-sin-qaf
43	al-Zukhruf	ha-mim
44	al-Dukhan	ha-mim
45	al-Jathiyah	ha-mim
46	al-Ahqaf	ha-mim
50	Qaf	qaf
68	al-Qalam	noon

Writing And Recording Of The Quran

For a time the Quran was being preserved by the early Muslims who would memorize the revelations received by the Holy Prophet. This was the normal practice at that time and the pre-Islamic Arabic poems were treated in the same way. However, as the revelations grew in number and as some of the Muslims who had memorized the Quran started to be lost in battles, the Holy Prophet appointed some scribes to write down the Quran.

As the Quranic verses were revealed in passages of varying sizes and belonging to different Surahs, the text of the Holy Quran did not exist in one volume during the life of the Prophet Muhammad. It was during the Caliphates of Abu Bakr and Umar that the task of collecting the Quran in one volume was entrusted to Zayd bin Thabit. During the time of Uthman, the third Caliph of Islam, an authorized version of the Quran was established which was then used for making duplicate copies. These duplicate copies were sent to various parts of the Muslim world to be used as standard texts for further copying.

The text of the Holy Quran has remained unchanged over the past 1400 years. The millions of copies of the Quran circulating in the world today are all identical down to a single letter. And this is not strange since God says in the Holy Quran that He Himself will guard this book:

> *"Surely it is We Who have revealed the Exposition, and surely it is We Who are its guardians"* (15:10)

WHAT DOES THE QURAN CONTAIN

To the Muslims, the Quran is the Word of God and contains complete guidance for mankind. Much of the Quran is about God, His attributes and man's relationship to Him. But it also contains directives for its followers, historical accounts of certain prophets and peoples, arguments for accepting Muhammad as a genuine Prophet and good news for the believers and warnings for the disbelievers. Broadly speaking, the contents of the Holy Quran fall into five main categories:

1. Nature of the Spiritual World
2. The Law and Commandments
3. Historical Accounts
4. The Wisdom
5. The Prophecies

One by one we will discuss these various aspects of the Holy Quran.

1. The Nature of Spiritual World

The central theme of the Quran is, of course, the doctrine of One God. The God of Quran is All-Powerful, All-Knowing, Merciful and Compassionate, and the sole Creator of the universe. He is the One Who gave us life, and when we die it is to Him that we will return. He not only listens to our prayers, but provides for our needs without even our asking; He is a Generous and Gracious God. In Surah al-Hashr, some of God's attributes are described as follows:

He is God, there is no god except Him;
The Knower of the unseen and the seen;
He is the Gracious, the Merciful.
He is God, there is no god except Him;
The Sovereign, the Holy One, the Giver of peace, the Bestower of security, the Protector, the Mighty, the Subduer, the Exalted.
Glory be to God, above that they associate.
He is God, the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner.
His are the most beautiful names.
All that is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Him,
He is the Mighty, the Wise. (59:23-25)

Besides containing illuminating facts about the various attributes of God, the Quran explains the rest of the spiritual world in considerable detail: the purpose of creation, the nature of angels, the nature of hell and heaven, the continuation of life after death, the divine revelations and the concept of the Day of Judgment.

Scriptures of other religions also talk about these spiritual things, but the philosophy contained in the Quran is far more rational, meaningful and capable of standing up to the test of time.

2. The Law and Commandments

Most of all, the Quran is the Law for the Muslims. It lays down commandments for worshipping God and contains numerous codes for the social and moral behaviour of its followers. In this respect, the Quran supersedes all previous Laws and Dispensations given to earlier prophets. The commandments in the Quran clearly tell the Muslims what to DO and what NOT to do. The following are some of the "positive" commandments in the Quran:

- worship One God (2:22)
- pray to the Lord in humility and in secret (7:56)
- observe the Daily Prayer (2:44)
- enjoin Prayer on your household (20:133)
- keep the fasts during the month of Ramadhan (2:184)
- pay the zakat (2:44)
- spend secretly and openly (14: 32)
- perform the pilgrimage (2:197)
- perform ablution before the Prayer (5:7)
- obey God and His prophets and those in authority among you (4:60)
- ask forgiveness of God (4:107)
- seek refuge with God from Satan, the cursed (16:99)
- be patient (3:201)
- follow the way of Abraham (16 :124)
- strive in the way of God (2:191)
- vie with one another in good works (2:149)
- eat of the good and pure things (2:173)
- give the orphans their due (4:3)
- make peace between the parties that fight each other (49:10)
- call the people to their Lord with wisdom and exhortation (16:126)
- fulfill the covenants (16:92)
- discharge the trusts (4:59)
- observe justice (4:136)
- keep the oaths and fulfill the promises (5:2), (5:90)
- be good to others (16:91)

- be good to the parents (2:84)
- look after the kinsman, the poor and the wayfarer (2:84)
- give full measure and full weight (7:86)
- guard your chastity (24:31)
- face the Sacred Mosque during the Prayer (2:150)
- seek help through perseverence and Prayer (2:154)
- give the women their dowries (4:5)
- greet each other with a greeting (4:87)
- invoke blessings on the Prophet (3:57)
- keep silent when the Quran is recited (7:205)

Similarly, there are "negative" commandments in the Quran which prohibit or forbid the Muslims from:

- associating any other deity with God (2:23)
- reviling other people's deities (6:109)
- making friends with people with whom God is angry (60:14)
- killing other people (2:105)
- stealing other people's property (5:39)
- devouring the property of the orphan (17:35)
- eating certain forbidden foods (2:174), (5:4)
- consuming alcoholic drinks (5:91)
- giving false testimony (2:284)
- taking interest (3:131)
- uttering unseemly speech in public (4:149)
- indecency and manifest evil (16:91)
- gambling (5:91)
- marrying idolatrous people (2:222)
- entering homes before asking for permission (24:28)
- spreading disorder in the earth (7:57)
- letting one people deride another people (49:12)
- becoming disdainfully proud (17:38)
- becoming divided (3:106)
- exceeding the limits in the matter of religion (4:172)
- using compulsion in the religion (2:257)
- being suspicious, spying and backbiting (49:13)
- following the footsteps of Satan (24:22)
- killing children for fear of poverty (17:32)

Besides the above mentioned DOs and DON'Ts, there are many other commandments in the Quran which control the institutions of marriage, divorce, inheritance and fighting.

All Muslims are supposed to follow these commandments. The willful violation of any of these commandments constitutes sin, and the violation of some of the social commandments can even be punishable by the society.

3. Historical Accounts

The Quran contains historicl accounts of many earlier prophets and peoples. The purpose of narrating these stories is to show mankind how loving and faithful God can be to His true servants and chosen people and also how utterly destructive His wrath can be upon those who disregard His Commands.

The various prophets whose lives are narrated in the Quran include Abraham, Joseph, Moses and Jesus, among others. Some of the earlier peoples that are mentioned in the Quran include, among others:

- the people of A'd — to whom Hud was sent
- the people of Thamud — to whom Saleh was sent
- the people of Midian — to whom Shuaib was sent
- the people of the Wood
- the people of the Hijr
- the peopl of Tubba
- the people of the Elephant

Many Surahs of the Holy Quran are named after the prophets such as Yunus, Hud, Yusuf, Ibrahim, Luqman, Muhammad, and Nuh. These Surahs, however, are not exclusively devoted to the accounts of these prophets and also contain other narratives and commandments. The only Surah that is entirely devoted to the account of one prophet is Surah Yusuf.

The Quran also gives an account of many incidents that took place during the life of the Prophet Muhammad. However, not many contemporaries of the Holy Prophet are mentioned by name. The only two persons whose names appear in the Quran are Zayd, the freed slave and

adopted son of the Prophet and Abu-Lahab, an uncle and arch enemy of his. Zayd's name occurs in Surah al-Ahzab, verse 38, and Abu-Lahab's name occurs in Surah Lahab, the 111th Chapter of the Holy Quran. The Prophet's own name, Muhammad, is mentioned only four times in the Holy Quran. At all other places he is referred to as the Prophet, the Messenger, the Warner or by some other similar title.

4. The Book of Wisdom

Most important of all, the Quran is a Book of Wisdom. Any person, whether he is a Muslim or not, can benefit from this treasure of God's Wisdom. Below are given some samplings of this wisdom:

- "A kind word and forgiveness are better than charity followed by injury " (2:264)
- "God burdens no soul beyond its capacity" (2:287)
- "Man is created of haste" (21:38)
- "If God helps you, none can overcome you; but if He forsakes you, then who is there who can help you beside Him" (3:161)
- "No soul that bears a burden shall bear the burden of another" (53:39)
- "Man will have nothing but what he strives for" (53:40)
- "If you keep away from more grievous of the things which are forbidden to you, God will remove from you your minor evils" (4:32)
- "And if you try to count the favours of God, you will not be able to count them" (14:35)
- "And We created not the heaven and the earth and all that is between the two, in sport" (21:17)
- "God cannot be questioned for what He does" (21:24)
- "O children of Adam, We have given you garments to cover your nakedness... but the garment of piety is the best of all garments" (7:27)
- "God deprives no people of the favours, until they change their own condition" (8:54)

- "And how many a sign is there in the heavens and the earth, but men pass them by, turning away" (12:106)
- "Those who prefer the life of the present world to that of the next, and hinder men from the way of God, and seek to make it crooked, have fallen into deepest error" (14:4)
- "Verily, he truly prospers who purifies himself" (87:15)
- "You prefer the life of this world, whereas the Hereafter is better and everlasting" (87:17-18)
- "We have surely created man to (face) hardships" (90:5)
- "Surely, man is ungrateful to His Lord; and surely, he is very keen for the love of wealth" (100:7-9)
- "Mutual rivalry in seeking worldly gains, diverts you from God" (102:2)
- "Wherever you may be, death will overtake you, even if you be in strongly built forts" (4:79)
- "And know that your possessions and your children are but a trial and that it is God with Whom there is a great reward" (8:29)
- "Certainly, God wrongs not men at all, but men wrong their own souls" (10:45)
- "Wealth and children are an ornament of the life of this world. But lasting good works are better in the sight of thy Lord" (18:47)
- "If the ocean became ink for the words of my Lord, surely, the ocean would be exhausted before the words of my Lord came to an end" (18:110)
- "And God increases in guidance those who follow guidance" (19:77)
- "Every soul shall taste of death" (21:36)
- "Is not God sufficient for His servant?" (39:37)
- "Man does not tire of praying for good; but if evil befalls him, he despairs, giving up all hope" (41:50)
- "When We bestow a favour on man, he goes away, turning aside; but when evil befalls him, behold! he starts offering long prayers" (41:52)

- "Verily, the most honourable among you, in the sight of God, is he who is the most righteous among you" (49:14)
- "It is most hateful in the sight of God that you should say what you do not do" (61:4)
- "God will soon bring about ease after hardship" (65:8)
- "Verily, getting up at night is the most potent means of subduing the self and most effective in respect of words of prayer" (73:7)
- "It is for Us to give life and death; and it is We Who are the sole inheritor" (15:24)
- "And call not any other beside God. There is no god but He; everything else will perish. His is the Judgment, and unto Him shall you return" (28:89)
- "Among His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the diversities of your tongues and your colours. In that indeed are signs for those who ponder" (30:23)

And, in the context of earlier generations of people:

- "Those are a people that have passed away; for them is what they earned, and for you shall be what you earn" (2:142)

5. Prophecies in the Quran

The Quran contains numerous prophecies which cover a wide span of time. Some of these prophecies were realized within days of the original revelation while others took months or years. Many were fulfilled after the death of the Holy Prophet and some relate to events, inventions and discoveries of the present day. Some of the prophecies even concern events of the distant future, up to the Day of Judgment. As God says in the Quran: *"For every prophecy there is a fixed time"* (6:68). Below are given some of the prophecies as examples:

(i) When the Holy Prophet was leaving Mecca at the time of Hijrah, he received the revelation:

"He Who has made the Quran binding on thee will most surely bring thee back to thy birth place" (28:86)

This prophecy was eventually fulfilled with the conquest of Mecca and the triumphant return of the Holy Prophet.

(ii) In the year 622 A.D., Chosroe's armies gained victories against Heraclius, the Emperor of Rome. The Iranians got control of Syria, Palestine, Egypt and Asia Minor and their armies reached within ten miles of the city of Constantinople. The people of Mecca rejoiced at this victory of the fire-worshipers of Iran against the People of the Book. At this time the Holy Prophet received the following revelation:

> *"The Romans have been defeated in the land nearby, And they, after their defeat, will be victorious in a few years; The dominion belongs to God, before and after; And on that day the believers will rejoice over the help of God"* (30:3-6)

This prophecy of *Surah ar-Rum* was fulfilled in a few years when the Romans defeated the Iranian armies and recovered their lost territories. This victory of the Romans also coincided with the victory of the Muslims at Badr and thus the second part of the prophecy, that the Muslims will rejoice that day, was also fulfilled.

(iii) In *Surah ar-Rahman,* there is a prophecy:

> *"He has made the two bodies of water to flow. They will (one day) meet. Between them there is a barrier which they cannot surmount... There come out from both of them pearls and coral"*(55:20-23)

This prophecy was fulfilled with the construction of Suez and Panama Canals in 1869 and 1914 respectively. The Suez Canal joined the Red Sea with the Mediterranian and the Panama Canal joined the Atlantic with the Pacific Ocean.

(iv) In Surah al-Hijr is a prophecy concerning the safe-guarding of the Holy Quran:

> *"It is We Who have revealed the Exposition, and it is We Who are its guardians"* (15:10)

The preservation of the Holy Quran in its original form is a well known fact. God has indeed guarded the Quran from any alteration, addition or omission. Of all the revealed books in the world, the Holy Quran is the only one which has remained completely unchanged since it was first compiled.

PRAYERS IN THE HOLY QURAN

Besides the ritual Prayer called *Salat,* Muslims are enjoined to pray to their Lord for all their spiritual and worldly needs. These Silent Prayers or supplications can be offered at any time during the day and in any language convenient to the believer.

All prayers in Islam are addressed directly to God, without going through the agency of any intermediary. The Holy Quran teaches its reader the proper words for prayer and supplication. This is achieved by direct exhortations to the believers as well as by examples of the prayers of earlier prophets and peoples.

The most well known and oft repeated prayer in the Holy Quran is *Surah al-Fatihah,* the first Chapter of the Holy Quran. This prayer is recited in all the Daily ritual Prayers:

In the name of God, the Gracious, the Merciful.
Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds,
The Gracious, the Merciful,
Master of the Day of Judgment,
Thee alone do we worship, and Thee alone do we ask for help.
Guide us along the straight path,
The path of those upon whom Thou bestowed Thy blessings,
Not of those who incurred Thy wrath,
Nor of those who have gone astray." (1:1-7)

Following are some more prayers mentioned in the Holy Quran:

- *"Our Lord, grant us good in this world as well as good in the hereafter, and protect us from the torment of the Fire."* (2:202)
- *"Our Lord, do not punish us if we forget or fall into error;*
  Our Lord, lay not upon us a responsibility as Thou laid upon those before us;
  Our Lord, burden us not with what we have not the strength to bear;
  And absolve our sins, and grant us forgiveness, and have mercy on us;
  Thou art our Master; so help us against the disbelieving people." *(2:287)*

- *"Our Lord, let not our hearts become perverse after Thou hast guided us; And bestow on us Thine mercy; surely, Thou alone art the Bestower."* (3:9)

- *"Our Lord, Thou hast not created this in vain; Holy art Thou; save us then from the torment of the Fire.*
  Our Lord, whomsoever Thou causest to enter the Fire, him have Thou surely disgraced...
  Our Lord, we have heard a Crier calling unto faith, 'Believe ye in your Lord', and we have believed.
  Our Lord, forgive us, therefore, our errors and remove from us our evils, and in death count us with the righteous.
  Our Lord, give us what Thou hast promised us through Thy Messengers; and disgrace us not on the Day of Resurrection.
  Surely, Thou breakest not Thy promise." (3:192-195)

- *"O my Lord, increase me in knowledge."* (20:115)

- *"Our Lord, grant us of our wives and children the delight of our eyes, and make us a model for the righteous."* (25:75)

- *"My Lord, grant me that I may be grateful for Thy favour which Thou hast bestowed upon me and upon my parents, and that I may do such good works as may please Thee. And make me and my seed righteous. I do turn to Thee; and, truly, I am of those who submit to thee"* (46:16)

When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, they asked for forgiveness from their Lord, praying:

- *"Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves; and if Thou forgive us not and have not mercy on us, we shall be of the lost."* (7:24)

When the Prophet Noah embarked on his Ark, he prayed:

- *"In the name of God be its course and its mooring. My Lord is surely Most Forgiving, Most Merciful."* (11:42)

- *"My Lord, cause me to land a blessed landing, for Thou art the Best of those who bring men to land."* (23:30)

The following are the prayers of Abraham which he said for himself and his progeny:

- *"Our Lord, make us submissive to Thee and make of our offspring a people obedient to Thee. And show us our ways of worship, and turn to us with mercy; for Thou art Oft-Returning, Merciful."* (2:129)

- *"My Lord, make me observe Prayer, and my children, too. Our Lord, accept this prayer. Our Lord, grant forgiveness to me and to my parents and to the believers on the day when the reckoning will take place."* (14:41-42)

- *"Our Lord, in Thee do we put our trust and to Thee do we turn, and towards Thee is the final return. Our Lord, make us not a trial for those who disbelieve, and forgive us, our Lord; for Thou art the Mighty, the Wise."* (60:6-7)

When the Prophet Joseph was appointed governor of a province in Egypt, he prayed as follows:

- *"Lord, Thou hast bestowed sovereignty upon me and taught me the interpretation of dreams. O Maker of the heavens and the earth, Thou art my protector in this world and the Hereafter. Make me die in a state of submission and join me with the righteous."* (12:102)

The following is the prayer of Prophet Moses when he was commanded by God to take the message to the Pharaoh:

- *"Lord, open up for me my breast, and ease for me my task, and loosen the knot of my tongue, that they may understand my speech, and grant me a helper from my family, Aaron my brother."* (20:26-31)

When the Pharaoh's magicians had believed in Moses and the Pharaoh threatened to cut off their hands and feet, the magicians prayed as follows:

- *"Our Lord, send down upon us steadfastness and cause us to die in a state of submission."* (7:127)

When the Prophet David and the Israelites faced Goliath, they prayed:

- *"Our Lord, bestow steadfastness upon us, and make our feet firm, and help us against the disbelieving people."* (2:251)

When the Prophet Job was afflicted, he prayed to his Lord:

- *"I have been afflicted with distress, and Thou art the Most Merciful of all those who show mercy."* (21:84)

The following is Zechariah's prayer for an offspring:

- *"Lord, leave me not childless, and Thou art the Best of inheritors."* (21:90)
- *"My Lord, grant me by Thy grace pure offspring; Surely, Thou art the Hearer of prayer."* (3:39)

The following is the prayer of the disciples of Prophet Jesus:

- *"Our Lord, we believe in that which Thou hast sent down and we follow the Messenger. So write us down among the witnesses."* (3:54)

The following are some of the Holy Prophet's prayers mentioned in the Holy Quran:

- *"Lord, I seek refuge with Thee from the incitements of the evil ones, and I seek refuge with Thee, Lord, lest they come near me."* (23:98-99)
- *"Lord, forgive and have mercy on us. For all those who show mercy Thou art the Most Merciful."* (23:119)
- *"Our Lord, avert from us the punishment of hell; for the punishment thereof is a lasting torment."* (25:66)

The following is a prayer said by the Angels on behalf of the believers:

- *"Our Lord, Thy mercy and knowledge extend over all things. So forgive those who repent and follow Thy way; and protect them from the punishment of hell. Our Lord, make them enter the Gardens of Eternity which Thou hast promised them, as well as such of their children as are virtuous. Surely, Thou art the Mighty, the Wise."* (40:8-10)

ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF THE HOLY QURAN

The Holy Quran has been translated into many major languages of the world. There are a large number of translations existing in the English language alone. The oldest English translation of the Quran is by Alexander Ross which was published in 1649, more than three hundred years ago. Following is a list of some of the well known English translators of the Holy Quran, with the dates of their publications against their names.

	1. Alexander Ross	1649
	2. George Sale	1734
	3. J.M. Rodwell	1861
	4. E.H. Palmer	1880
	5. Abdul Hakim	1905
	6. Mirza Abdul Fazl	1910
►	7. Muhammad Ali	1917
	8. Ghulam Sarwar	1929
	9. Marmaduke Pickthall	1930
	10. Abdullah Yusuf Ali	1934
	11. Richard Bell	1937
	12. A.J. Arberry	1955
►	13. Sher Ali	1955
	14. N.J. Dawood	1956
	15. Abdul Majid Daryabadi	1957
	16. Mir Ahmed Ali	1964
	17. Muhammad Asad	1964
	18. Syed Abdul Latif	1968
►	19. Malik Ghulam Farid	1969
►	20. Pir Salahuddin	1969
►	21. M. Zafrulla Khan	1971
	22. Hashim Amir Ali	1974
	23. Rashad Khalifa	1981

► Members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community

COMMENTARIES OF THE HOLY QURAN

Besides the simple translation of the Arabic text into various languages, there exist a number of books which also contain detailed explanatory notes and interpretations of the Quran. Such a book is called ***Tafsir*** or Commentary of the Holy Quran. It should be noted that a commentary and interpretation is largely a matter of individual opinion. Some of the best known Commentaries of the Holy Quran are in the Arabic language. A list of some of the better known Commentaries is given below:

Name of Commentary	Author
Commentaries in the Arabic Language	
Commentary of the Quran	Imam ibn Jarir Tabari
Tafsir of ibn al-Kathir	ibn al-Kathir
Al-Kashaf an Ghawamid al-Tanzil	Imam Zamakhshari
Al-Bahr al-Muhit	ibn Yusuf of Granada
Durr Manthur	Jalaluddin Sayuti
Ruh al-Ma'ani	Abul Shihab Baghdadi
Anwar al-Tanzil	Nasir ud-Din Baydawi
Fatah al-Qadir	ibn Ali Shaukani
Fatah al-Bayan	Siddiq bin Hasan
Tafsir Kabir	Imam Fakhruddin Razi
Qurtubi	Abdullah al-Qurtabi
Ruh al-Bayan	Sheikh Ismail Haqqi
Commentaries in the Urdu Language	
Tafsir Kabir	Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad
Majma al-Bayan	Muhammad Ali
Commentaries in the English Language	
Commentary on the Quran	Rev. E.M. Wherry
The Holy Quran with English Translation and Commentary	Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad

SECTION 3

THE LIFE OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD

SEAL OF THE PROPHETS

THE SEMITIC RACE AND THE BACKGROUND OF ISLAM

The Arabs belong to the Semitic race. Of all the various races in the world, the Semitic people have perhaps contributed the most to the civilization of Man. Arabia, the birth place of Islam, is considered to be the probable cradle of the Semitic race. In the course of time these Semitic people migrated into different parts of the Fertile Crescent and became known as the Babylonians, Assyrians, Chaldaeans, Amorites, Phoenicians, Canaanites, and the Hebrews of history.

It was the people of the Semitic race who gave the world its three greatest monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. The term ***Semite*** is derived from ***Shem,*** the eldest son of Noah and the progenitor of the Semitic people.

According to historians, the first migration of the Semitic race occurred around 3500 B.C. and carried these people from their original homeland in Arabia (perhaps around Najd) to the regions of Egypt, Canaan, and Mesopotamia.

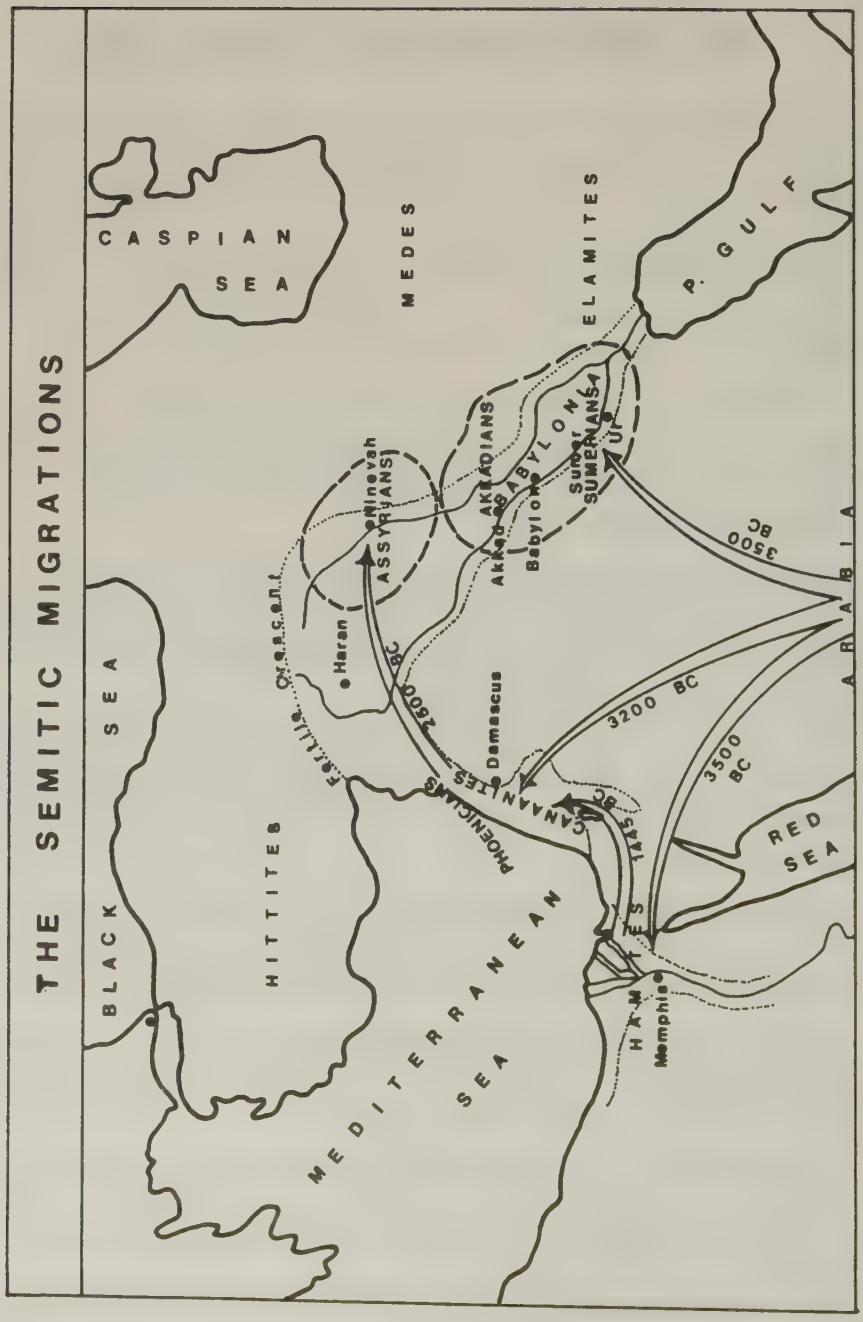
One branch of the Semitic people went to Egypt which was then populated by the Hamitic people, a branch of the white race. The amalgamation of the Hamites and the Semitic migrants produced the Egyptians of history.

Another branch of the Semitic people went to the south-eastern part of Mesopotamia which was then populated by the Sumerians. The admixture of these two peoples gave rise to the Babylonians of history.

Another branch of the Semitic people settled down in the Canaan region, and later, on the coastal strip of Sidon and Tyre, and gave rise to the Canaanites and Phoenicians of history.

Around 2500 B.C., another migration of the Semitic people, called the Amorites, started from the Canaan-Phoenicia area and reached the eastern part of the Fertile Crescent, producing the Assyrians of history.

The early civilization in the Tigro-Euphrates area consisted of city states. The first known king of Sumer was Etana (3000 B.C.), while


THE SEMITIC MIGRATIONS
CASPIAN SEA
MEDES
ELAMITES
P. GULF
BLACK SEA
HITTITES
Haran
Nineveh
ASSYRIANS
AKKADIANS
Babylon
SUMERIANS
Ur
3500 BC
2500 BC
Damascus
3200 BC
3500 BC
PHOENICIANS
CANAANITES
1300 BC
ARABIA
RED SEA
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
HYKSOS
Memphis

Akkad was ruled by the Akkadian dynasty founded by Sargon I.

Then, around 2100 B.C., Hammurabi of the Amorites united the entire Akkad-Sumer region and renamed it as Babylon. Hammurabi was a great administrator and legislator. He established a proper code of conduct for the people which is known today as the "Code of Hammurabi". This code is perhaps the oldest code known to man and deals with the rights and duties of the various classes of people living in the Babylonian Empire.

After the death of Hammurabi, the Babylonian Empire started to decline till the 8th century B.C. when it was conquered by the Assyrians from the north.

The Assyrians were a group of Semitic people who had established themselves over the northern region of the Mesopotamian valley. Through warfare and aggression, the Assyrians conquered a vast territory, including Babylonia.

In 722 B.C., Sargon II, an Assyrian king, conquered Samaria, the capital of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Sargon II carried away as captives the most influential men of the Ten Tribes of the Hebrews. These captives are known in history as the Lost Ten Tribes.

Sennacherib (705-681 B.C.) and Ashurbanipal (668-626 B.C.) were the other two famous kings of the Assyrians. Ashurbanipal was the greatest king of Assyria and the entire western Asia acknowledged his authority. On his death, the Assyrian Empire started to decline and in 612 B.C. Ninevah, the capital of Assyria, fell to the conquering Medes of Persia.

On the fall of Assyria, the Babylonian Empire rose to prominence again under the Chaldean dynasty (625-538 B.C.). Nabopolassar was the founder of this New Babylonian dynasty and his son, Nebuchadnezzar, was its greatest king. It was under him that Babylon recovered its ancient splendour and glory. In 586 B.C., he defeated the Hebrew king of Judah, destroyed the city of Jerusalem and exiled the Jews from the city. It was Nebuchadnezzar who built the Hanging Gardens of Babylon for the pleasure of his wife. In 539 B.C., the Chaldean Empire was overthrown by the Medes of Persia under their king Cyrus. Cyrus then allowed the exiled Jews to return to Jerusalem and

start the restoration of their sacred city.

The branch of the Semitic race known as the Hebrews lived in the Canaan region around 2100 B.C. When Joseph became governor of a province of Egypt, many Hebrews migrated to that land. The later kings of Egypt, however, mistreated the Israelites who spent the next three hundred years in bondage and servitude under their Egyptian masters. Finally, in 1445 B.C., the Israelites left Egypt in an Exodus under the direction of Moses and eventually returned to their original homeland in the Canaan area. The later history of the Hebrew people is described in some detail in this book under the title Judaism.

All the Semitic peoples share not only a common ethnic heritage but their languages also form a common speech group. To the Semitic languages belong the Akkadian (the language of ancient Babylon and Assyria), Canaanite (of which ancient Phoenician and Hebrew are variant forms), Aramaic (which survives today in the form of Syriac), and Arabic. A common feature of all these Semitic languages is a system of derivation from roots which normally consist of three consonants. The Arabic language today is considered to be the closest to what scholars believe was the primitive form of the Semitic speech.

ARABIA AT THE TIME OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD'S BIRTH

The Holy Prophet Muhammad was born in Mecca in the year 570 A.D. The city of Mecca is located in the western part of the Arabian Peninsula which is a rectangular shaped block of land surrounded on three sides by the waters of the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Sea and the Red Sea. To the north lies another formidable barrier, the Syrian Desert. For this reason the inhabitants of Arabia used to refer to their land as al-Jazirah, the Island.

Most of the Arabian Peninsula is a desert land of scorching sun with oases and settlements scattered here and there. There is not a single river in Arabia which flows perennially and reaches the sea. None of its streams are navigable. Longer than man can remember, Bedouin tribes have inhabited this region, constantly moving in search of food and pastures. Caravan routes cross the desert in all directions. In ancient times, caravans carried spices from Mecca to the city of

ARABIA AT THE TIME OF PROPHET MUHAMMED
BLACK SEA
Byzantium
Byzantine Empire
CASPIAN SEA
MEDITERRANIAN SEA
SYRIA
R.Euphrates
R.Tigris
Sasanid Empire
Baghdad
IRAN
EGYPT
Mutah
Basra
R.Nile
Tabuk
PERSIAN GULF
ARABIA
Khyber
Uhud
Badr
Medinah
OMAN
Mecca
Taif
RED SEA
YEMEN
ABYSSINIA
ARABIAN SEA

Damascus in Syria.

The Meccans trace their ancestry back to Ishmael who, along with his father Abraham, rebuilt the Ka'ba some 4,000 years ago. The Arabs were largely an idolatrous people worshiping many gods. It is said that the Ka'ba contained some 360 idols, one for each day of the year. Even in pre-Islamic days, Mecca enjoyed a certain importance among the Arabs who used to come there for their annual pilgrimage and for performing sacrifices to their gods.

Although Allah was the Supreme God of the Arabs, they also believed in a number of other deities. Following is a list of some of the principal deities of the Arabs before Islam:

Allah	the Supreme God
Hubal	the chief of the minor deities
al-Uzza	identified with the planet Venus
al-Lat	a female deity located at Ta'if
Manat	a large sacrificial stone
Taghut	an idol in the shape of a lion
Wadd	a statue in the form of a man
Suwah	an idol in the form of a woman
Ya'uq	worshiped in the form of a horse
Nasr	worshiped in the form of an eagle
Yaghuth	an idol worshiped by the tribe of Murad
Isaf	an idol that stood on Mount Safa
Naila	an image on Mount Marwa
Duwar	a favourite idol with the young women

Of the above Arab deities, the names of al-Uzza, al-Lat and Manat are mentioned in *Surah al-Najm* (53:20-21), and the names of Wadd, Suwah, Ya'uq, Nasr and Yaghuth are mentioned in *Surah Nuh* (71:24).

Aside from the idolatrous Arabs, there were Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians, and Hanifs Living in Arabia. Zoroastrianism was the ancient religion of Iran and Hanifs were a small group of monotheistic people who traced their religion back to the Prophet Abraham. The Tradition of the Holy Prophet indicates that his natural religious inclination was towards the Hanifite beliefs before the advent of Islam.

While the Peninsula of Arabia was ruled by different tribes with their own recognized territories, the world outside was more organized. To the east existed the Sasanid Empire of Iran, to the north the Christian Byzantine Empire and to the west, across the Red Sea. the Kingdom of Abyssinaia.

The Sasanid Empire came into being in the year 226 A.D. and the Sasanid dynasty ruled over Iran for four centuries. The last king of the dynasty was Chosroes Parvez who ascended the throne in 590 A.D. He was a contemporary of the Byzantine Emperor, Heraclius and of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. The official religion of the Sasanid Empire was Zoroastrianism, a monotheistic faith founded by the Prophet Zoroaster around 1500 B.C.

The Byzantine Empire (also called the Eastern Roman Empire) consisted of Syria, Palestine, Egypt and part of southeastern Europe. The Empire was named after Byzantium, a Greek city on the Bosporus which is a narrow strait connecting the Black Sea with the Mediterranean. In 327 A.D. Byzantium was made the capital of the EasternRoman empire by Constantine the Great, and the city was renamed Constantinople. Today the city of Constantinople is called Istanbul. During the time of the Prophet Muhammad, Heraclius was the Emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire. The armies of Chosroes and Heraclius were constantly at war throughout the lifetime of the Prophet.

The Abyssinian Kingdom was ruled by King Negus, or Najashi as the Arabs used to call him. At the time of the Holy Prophet, the Kingdom of Abyssinia was at its height and an ally of the Byzantine Empire. Like the Byzantine Empire, the religion of the Abyssinian Kingdom was Christianity.

It is said that around the year 570 A.D., the Christian Chief of Yemen, named Abraha, attempted to invade Mecca with the intention of destroying the Ka'ba. Abraha's army rode on elephants and in the Arab history the year 570 A.D. is known as the Year of the Elephant. Abraha did not succeed in his mission and his army was destroyed by an epidemic of disease and a terrible storm. The Quranic Surah al-Fil, refers to this event.

The Arab culture was a strange mixture of extreme moral defects and some admirable qualities. On the one hand drinking, gambling, personal vendettas and burying alive of baby girls were commonplace.

On the other hand, the Arabs were well known for their hospitality, honour, bravery and love for Arabic poetry. It was among such people that the Holy Prophet of Islam was born.

PROPHET MUHAMMAD'S EARLY LIFE

Prophet Muhammad was born in 570 A.D. in the Hashimite branch of the tribe of Quraysh. His father's name was Abdullah and his mother's Aminah. His grandfather, Abdul-Muttalib, was the chief of Mecca at the time of Abraha's invasion. Shortly after his marriage, Abdullah went to Yathrib (Medinah) in pursuit of trade. He died there a few months before the Prophet was born.

When the Prophet Muhammad was two years old, he was sent to a nurse named Halima of the tribe of Banu Sa'd. Living in the desert he learned from this tribe the purest and most classical form of the Arabic language. In his later years the Holy Prophet used to tell his companions:

> "I am the most Arab among you, for I am of the tribe of Quraysh and I have been brought up among the tribe of Banu Sa'd."

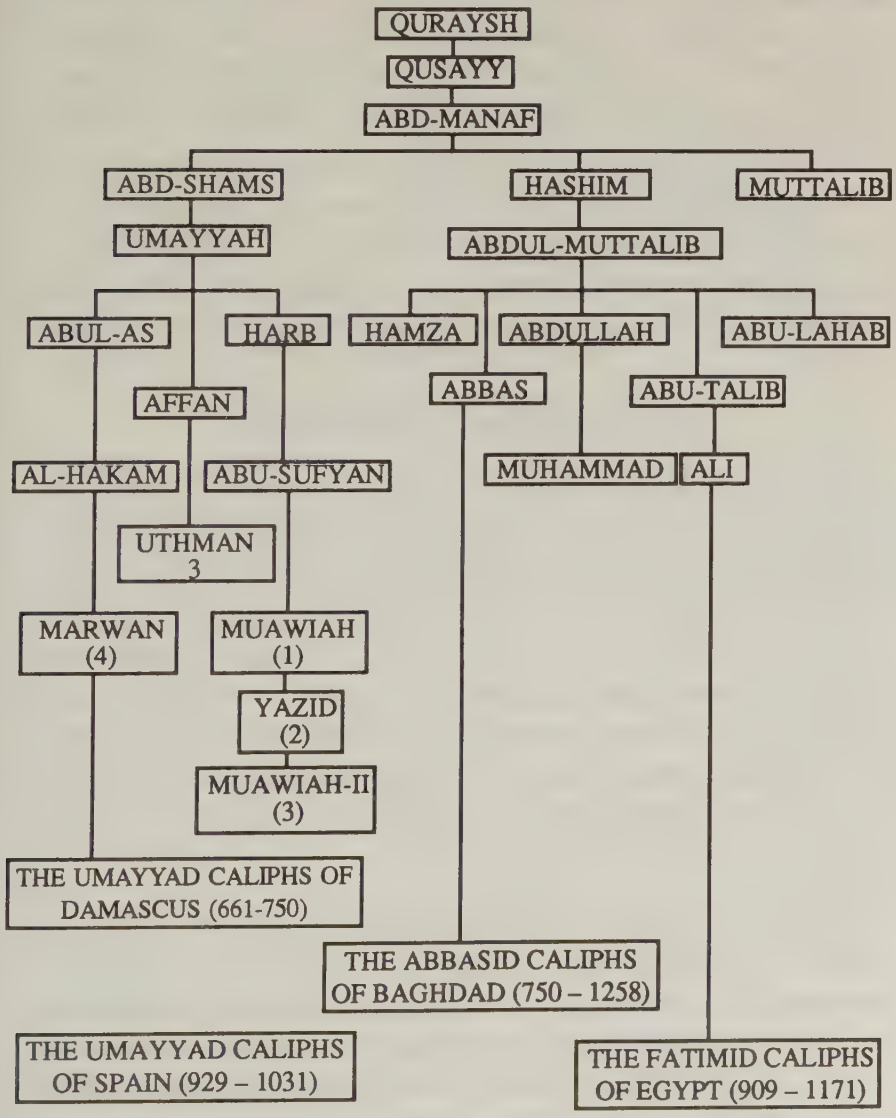
In the sixth year of his life, Prophet Muhammad was returned to the care of his mother who took him to Yathrib to meet other relatives. On the way back from Yathrib, his mother fell ill and died.

Prophet Muhammad's grandfather, Abdul-Muttalib, was very fond of him and took him under his own care. But the guardianship of his grandfather lasted only two years and when the Prophet Muhammad was eight years old, his grandfather also passed away. On his deathbed, Abdul-Muttalib entrusted his grandson to the care of one of his sons, Abu Talib.

Although Abu Talib took the Prophet Muhammad under his own care, he was not a rich man and had to support his own family as well. When the Prophet grew older, he started earning his own living by modest business transactions but mostly as a shepherd. In his early teens the Prophet accompanied his uncle Abu Talib on a journey to al-Sham (Syria). In connection with this trip the biographers relate young

FAMILY TREE OF THE HOLY PROPHET AND THE VARIOUS CALIPHATE DYNASTIES

The first two caliphs are not shown below. Abu Bakr belonged to the Banu-Taym branch and Umar to the Banu-Adi branch of the tribe of Quraysh. The third and fourth caliphs are shown by numbers. The first four caliphs of the Umayyad dynasty are shown by numbers in brackets.



Muhammad's encounter with a monk named Bahirah who recognized in him the signs of prophethood and advised Abu Talib to take good care of him.

While the Prophet Muhammad was in his teens, the valley of Mecca saw a bloody fighting erupt among the various tribes. Many persons were killed in these tribal feuds which lasted many years. These wars were fought during the sacred months when fighting was prohibited among the Arabs. For this reason these wars are known in history as the *Fijar* or "Sacrilegious" Wars. After the fighting was finally over, some energetic youths from the various tribes made a pact among themselves to maintain peace and order in the area and help the poor and the oppressed people. Prophet Muhammad was a member of this agreement which was named ***Hilf al-Fadhool,*** or the Alliance of Fadhals, in memory of an ancient society instituted with similar objectives by four persons named Fadhl, Fadhal, Mufadhal and Fudhayl.

MARRIAGE TO KHADIJAH

Even in his youth the Prophet Muhammad was well known for his honesty, sincerity and truthfulness. At the time there lived in Mecca a rich lady by the name of Khadijah who was twice widowed. On hearing of Muhammad's fame, she invited him to her house and requested him to take charge of her business. Muhammad travelled to Syria in charge of Khadijah's business and the expedition met with great success and brought unexpected profits. Khadijah made a proposal of marriage to Muhammad which was accepted. At the time of his marriage, Muhammad was twenty-five years old while Khadijah was forty.

From his marriage to Khadijah, the Holy Prophet had seven children: three sons and four daughters. All the Prophet's sons died in infancy. The four daughters reached womanhood and got married but all died before the age of thirty. Only Fatimah outlived her father, and that by six months. Following are the names of the Prophet's children from his first marriage:

sons:	Qasim	
	Tahir	
	Tayyeb	
daughters:	Zaynab	married to Abul A's
	Ruqayyah	married to Utbah, a son of Abu Lahab. Marriage ended in divorce. She then married Uthman, who became the third successor of the Holy Prophet.
	Umme-Kalthum	married to Utaybah, another son of Abu Lahab. This marriage ended in divorce too. She also married Uthman, after the death of Ruqayyah.
	Fatimah	married to Ali, son of Abu Talib.

After the birth of his first son, Prophet Muhammad took on the *kunniyat* of Abul Qasim, meaning the Father of Qasim, and was usually addressed by the people by this name.

A DISPUTE RESOLVED

Prophet Muhammad's desire for maintaining peace and averting conflict is quite evident from an incident that occurred when he was about thirty-five years old. The Quraysh of Mecca decided to rebuild the Ka'ba after some cracks had appeared in its walls. All the families of the Quraysh assisted in this effort. As the walls rose from the ground and the time came to replace the sacred black stone in its place, a dispute broke out. Each of the four main families of the Quraysh wanted this honour exclusively for themselves and the construction of the Ka'ba came to a halt. After many days of suspended work, the Quraysh assembled again and decided that the first person to enter the Ka'ba's courtyard will be chosen to settle the dispute. Muhammad happened to be that person. Muhammad quickly grasped the situation and asked that the black stone be placed on a sheet of cloth. He then asked the four families of the Quraysh to hold each corner of the cloth and raise the stone to its place. Thus Muhammad, through his wisdom, averted the conflict and resolved the dispute in a manner acceptable to the Quraysh.

THE FIRST REVELATION

After his marriage to Khadijah, the Prophet Muhammad became very reflective. He used to retire to a cave on Mount Hira and spend his time in meditation and seclusion. He sometimes spent many nights in this cave and on one of these occasions had an extraordinary experience. One night, in the year 610 A.D., he was lying, wrapped in a mantle, when the Angel Gabriel visited him. Four times the Angel embraced him tightly and said: *"Read."* Each time the Prophet replied: *"What shall I read?"* Then the Angel replied:

Read, in the name of thy Lord who created,
Created man from a clot of blood.
Recite, for thy Lord is most Beneficent;
Who taught by the pen,
Taught man what he knew not.

Prophet Muhammad was forty years old at the time of this first revelation which marks the beginning of his prophethood. These five verses of the first revelation are part of *Surah al-Alaq,* the 96th Chapter of the Holy Quran. The night of the first revelation occurred towards the end of the month of Ramadhan and was later named ***laylatul Qadr*** or the Night of Power.

When the vision in the cave vanished, the Prophet awoke full of fear. He realized that a big responsibility was being given to him which he was not sure he could carry out. He hurried back to his home and narrated the incident to his wife Khadijah, saying,

> "Weak man that I am, how can I carry the responsibility which God proposes to put on my shoulders?"

Khadijah replied at once:

> "God is witness, He has not sent you this Word that you should fail and prove unworthy and that He should then give you up. How can God do such a thing, while you are kind and considerate to your relations, help the poor and the forlorn and bear their burdens? You are restoring the virtues that had disappeared from our country. You treat guests with honour

and help those who are in distress. Can you be subjected by God to any trial?"

Having said this, Khadijah took the Prophet to her cousin, Waraqa bin Naufal, who was a Christian hermit. When Waraqa heard the account, he said:

"The angel who descended on Moses, I am sure, has descended on you. Your people will oppose you and will turn you out. I wish that I was alive at that time and could help you"

Although the first revelation marked the beginning of the prophetic career of Muhammad, it did not contain any special instructions for him. Such instructions started to come down in subsequent revelations. A second revelation followed soon and more clearly defind the Prophet's mission.

O thou covered in a mantle
Arise and deliver thy warning
And thy Lord do thou magnify
And thy garments do thou purify
And all uncleanliness do thou shun
And give not just to gain more
And for thy Lord's cause, be patient

The above verses belong to *Surah al-Muddathir,* the 74th Chapter of the Holy Quran.

Another night soon after this, the Prophet was given further commands to intensify his worship. In this third revelation he was clearly told that a great responsibility was indeed being placed on his shoulder:

O thou wrapped in a mantle
Pray at night except for a small portion----
Half of it or a little less, or a little more----
And recite the Quran a good recital
Verily, We will cast upon thee a mighty Word.....
And remember the name of thy Lord and devote thyself to Him very devoutly
The Lord of the East and the West
There is none worthy of worship except Him
So take Him for thy Guardian" (73:2-10)

PREACHING IN MECCA AND THE OPPOSITION

At first the Prophet reported his visions and revelations to a few close relatives and friends. A number of these believed in him and embraced the new religion. The very first person to accept Islam was, of course, his wife Khadijah. Then came Ali, his cousin, and Abu Bakr, his childhood friend. These were followed by Uthman, Abdur-Rahman, Zayd, al-Zubayr, and Talha. Zayd was Prophet Muhammad's freed slave and adopted son.

Then, as commanded, the Prophet took his preaching to his own clan. One day he climbed on top of Mount Safa, in Mecca, and called out:

"O people of Quraysh!
"O people of Quraysh!"

Hearing his call, the people of Quraysh gathered around him and asked what was the matter. The Prophet said:

> "If I told you that there was an army behind this hill, would you believe me?"

They all replied:

> "Indeed, for we trust you, and we have never known you to tell a lie."

The Prophet then said:

> "Know then that I am a Warner and I warn you of a severe punishment. O Banu Abdul Muttalib! O Banu Abd Manaf! O Banu Zuhra! O Banu Taym! O Banu Makhzum! O Banu Asad! God has commanded me to warn my nearest kinsmen, that I can guarantee to you no good on the earth or in heaven unless you witness that there is none worthy of worship except God."

Hearing this, the Prophet's uncle, Abu Lahab, got up and said:

> "Perish thou this very day! was it for this that thou assembled us here?"

Not discouraged at this cruel and harsh reception from his own kinsfolk, the Holy Prophet took his preaching to the people of Mecca

at large. He spoke to them around the Ka'ba and he talked to them in the streets of Mecca. His message to the people in each case was very simple:

> "God is One. There is none worthy of worship except Him. He has no associate. He is the sole Creator of the Universe. God is Unseen and All-Powerful and to portray Him with figures and statues is not right. Muhammad is God's Messenger just like Abraham, Moses and Jesus..."

In short, the Holy Prophet asked the people to give up idol worship, return to the worship of One God and be kind and charitable to the poor.

The Meccans, however, rejected the Prophet's message and displayed considerable hostility to him and his followers. The Meccans did not like to be told that the religion of their forefathers was absurd. Mecca, moreover, enjoyed a certain status in Arabia due to the Ka'ba and the annual pilgriamge. The Meccans saw in Islam a real threat to their own social and political power and did their utmost to oppose this new religion.

The chief among these opponents were Umar bin Hisham (known among the Muslims as Abu Jahal, the father of ignorance), Abu Lahab the Prophet's uncle, Abu Sufyan, the leading man of the House of Umayyah, and Uqbah bin Mueet, also of the House of Umayyah.

While the nobility of Mecca turned a deaf ear to the Prophet's call, the poor and the oppressed were strongly attracted to his teaching. Slaves, young men and hapless women collected aroung the Prophet. These people saw that Islam recognized the rights of the poor, the slaves and the women and they saw a new hope for themselves in this religion.

The acceptance of the Prophet's teachings by the poor made the chiefs of Mecca all the more angry and vengeful. The Meccans were a class-conscious society and the chiefs of Mecca could not even think that the poor could have the same rights as themselves. The Quraysh, therefore, started to illtreat the Prophet and his followers. The brunt of their wrath fell upon the converted slaves and the poor people of the lower classes who had no patron or protector. These helpless people

were abused, persecuted and tortured but rarely did anyone renounce his religion. Bilal, a negro slave, was made to lie on hot sand, and stones were put on his chest. Yasir, a poor man, was tortured till he died, and his wife, Sumayyah, was murdered by Abu Jahal. Many a slave were rescued from persecution by the rich and influential Abu Bakr who would buy them and set them free.

The Prophet himself was under the protection of his uncle Abu Talib. This, however, did not stop his opponents to maltreat him when ever they got an opportunity. On one occasion the Holy Prophet was saying his Prayer at the Ka'ba when a person, on the instigation of Abu Jahal, brought the innards of a camel and dumped them on his back. The Prophet was in the state of prostration at the moment and could not lift himself up due to the heavy weight. One of his daughters eventually came to his help and pushed the burden aside. Similarly, in the streets of Mecca the Prophet was a perpetual target of fun and mockery. He, however, remained steadfast in his mission to convey the message of God to the people and to warn them of the Day of Judgment, when they will all be held accountable for their deeds.

EMIGRATION TO ABYSSINIA

When oppression in Mecca reached its extreme, the Prophet advised his followers to seek refuge in a foreign land. As a result, in the fifth year of the Prophet's mission, a small party of Muslims, consisting of eleven men and four women, set out for Abyssinia. The Kingdom of Abyssinia was ruled at the time by a Christian king named Negus (Najashi) who was well known for his justice.

When the Quraysh learned of this emigration, they sent a delegation to the King with the request to expel the Muslims from his Kingdom. They told the King that the Muslims had started a new religion in opposition to their ancestral faith as well as to Christianity. The King summoned the Muslims to his court and demanded an explanation. Ja'far bin Abu Talib spoke on behalf of the Muslims:

> "O King, we were an ignorant people, given to idolatry. We did not make good our obligations to our relations, and ill treated our neighbours. The strong among us thrived at the

expense of the weak. Then, at last, God raised a Prophet for our reformation. He called us to worship One God and exhorted us to give up idolatry. He enjoined us to speak the truth, to make good our trusts and to be good to our neighbours. He taught us to avoid bloodshed and forbade all indecent things. So we believed in him, followed him and acted upon his teachings. Thereupon our people turned against us and subjected us to tortures. When their cruelties exceeded all bounds, we came to your country seeking asylum''

After this Ja'far recited a passage from *Surah Maryam* which showed Negus the great respect and reverence Muslims had for the Prophet Jesus.

Negus was greatly impressed by the morals and ideals of the Muslims and allowed them to stay in his land as long as they wished. The Quraysh delegation had to return to Mecca unsuccessfully.

These early emigrants to Abyssinia did not stay in that country for long. On hearing the rumour that relations between the Muslims and the Quraysh had improved, the emigrants returned to Mecca within a few months only to find the persecution worse than ever before.

AL-MIRAJ (THE ASCENT)

In the fifth year of his call, the Holy Prophet experienced a spiritual event known as *al-Miraj* or the Ascent. In this vision he saw the Angel Gabriel take him to the heavens. There he met a number of earlier prophets in the seven levels of the heaven and eventually found himself in the presence of God. It was in this vision that the five Daily Prayers were enjoined upon his followers. The Tradition of the Holy Prophet gives detailed accounts of how the number of Daily Prayers was reduced from fifty to five.

THE SECOND EMIGRATION TO ABYSSINIA

In the meantime, the Quraysh redoubled their persecution of Muslims. The Prophet again advised his followers to take refuge in Abyssinia. The emigrants this time numbered 101, including 18

women. This second group of emigrants stayed in Abyssinia until the Prophet's emigration to Yathrib.

At the rapid success of Islam, the Quraysh became frightened. They went to Abu Talib and offered to give all sorts of riches to the Prophet Muhammad on the condition that he give up his mission. Abu Talib called the Prophet and told him about the wishes of the Quraysh. On hearing this the Prophet replied:

> "O my uncle, if they were to place the sun on my right hand and the moon on my left, I will not give up preaching the truth of One God. I must go on doing so until I die."

In the sixth year of the Prophet's call, Hamzah and Umar bin Khattab accepted Islam. Both men were brave and highly influential in the Meccan society and their conversion brought great moral and physical support to the Muslim community.

BOYCOTT OF THE HASHIMITES

Seeing the influence of the Prophet spreading everywhere, the Quraysh took punitive measures against the Hashimite branch of the tribe. In the 7th year of the mission, the Quraysh proclaimed a total boycott of the Hashimites who were forced to retire into the secluded quarter of the city. During this period the Hashimites were cut off from supplies of corn and other foodstuff. Also, no one would trade with them or talk to them during this period. Not all the Hashimites were Muslims but the entire clan endured this difficult situation for the sake of their Muslim kinsfolk. This state of affairs lasted for nearly three years.

Finally, five decent members of the enemy revolted against this terrible situation and the boycott was lifted. After the lifting of the boycott, there was a temporary relaxation of hostilities against the Muslims. Exaggerated reports of this temporary improvement in the situation reached Abyssinia, whereupon many of the Muslim emigrants returned to Mecca including the Prophet's daughter, Ruqayya, and her husband, Uthman.

In the year 619 AD, not long after the lifting of the boycott, the Prophet suffered two great personal losses. The Prophet was fifty

years old when both his wife and his uncle, Abu Talib, passed away one after the other. Khadijah had been married to the Prophet for twenty-five years and gave him moral support through the most critical period of his life. Abu Talib, though he never accepted Islam, continued to give his protection and affection to the Prophet against the great opposition of the Quraysh. The Prophet Muhammad was highly grieved at the loss of both these persons and the year of their deaths is known in Islamic history as the "the Year of the Sorrow".

THE PROPHET VISITS TA'IF

When life became very difficult in Mecca and people would not listen to him, the Prophet decided to go to Ta'if and preach to the people there. Zayd, his freed slave and adopted son, accompanied the Prophet on this journey. Ta'if was a small town about sixty miles south-east of Mecca and, like it, was inhabited by idol worshipers. The Holy Prophet stayed in Ta'if for a few days and preached to its chiefs without any success. The chiefs of Ta'if set vagabonds and street boys at the Prophet who pelted him with stones and drove him out of the city. Both Zayd and the Prophet were wounded. The Prophet was grieved and dejected at this treatment when an angel appeared and asked him if he wished his persecutors to be destroyed. The Prophet replied, "No. I hope one day their children will accept Islam and worship the One God"

On his way back from Ta'if, the Prophet rested in a vineyard which belonged to two Meccans. They were his persecutors at Mecca but on this occasion they were sympathetic and sent him a trayful of grapes carried by a Christian slave, named Addas. The Prophet asked the slave where he was from, and Addas replied, "Ninevah." Upon this the Holy Prophet said, "Ninevah, the home of Jonah son of Mathew, who was a prophet like me." The Prophet also told Addas about his own mission and teachings. Addas felt as if he was in the presence of an Israelite Prophet and immediately embraced Islam.

FIRST PLEDGE OF AQABAH

During the season of a pilgrimage, the Prophet met a group of six men from Yathrib. He explained to them his mission and asked for their help in spreading his message in their home town. On their return

to Yathrib, these people spread the news that a prophet had risen among the Meccans.

During the next pilgrimage season, in the year 621 A.D., a group of twelve faithful followers came from Yathrib. The Prophet met these people at a place called Aqabah, where they all took an oath at the Prophet's hands, never to worship anything except God. This is known as the First Pledge of Aqabah.

AL-ISRA (THE NIGHT JOURNEY)

In the year 621 A.D., the eleventh year of the Prophet's call, he experienced another spiritual event. The Prophet at the time was staying with his cousin, Hind, the daughter of his uncle Abu Talib. She was also known as Umm Hani.

In a spiritual vision during the night, the Holy Prophet was transported from the Sacred Mosque in Mecca to the Prophet Solomon's Temple at Jerusalem which was known to the Muslims as the Distant Mosque.

This vision, although purely spiritual, was so vivid and realistic in its nature that the Holy Prophet could easily describe the city of Jerusalem and the Distant Mosque to the amazement of the disbelievers.

SECOND PLEDGE OF AQABAH

In the following year, 622 A.D., some seventy-three people came from Yathrib, at the time of the pilgrimage to Mecca. These people secretly met the Prophet in the valley of Aqabah and offered an oath of allegience to him. These new converts to Islam pledged to help and protect him if the need ever arose. They also extended him an invitation to come to Yathrib.

HIJRAT TO MEDINAH

After the second pledge of Aqabah, the Muslims in Mecca started to migrate to Yathrib in small groups. There they enjoyed greater freedom to practice their religion. Soon, hardly any of the Prophet's

Companions was left in Mecca except Abu Bakr and Ali. When Abu Bakr asked for the Prophet's permission to emigrate, he said, "Go not away, for God may give you a companion." Abu Bakr understood that he must wait for the Prophet and started making necesary preparations.

When the Quraysh realized that they could not stop the flow of conversion, they became furious and decided to murder the Holy Prophet himself. The leaders of the Quraysh gathered together and devised a plan under which each clan was to nominate a person. All the persons thus selected were to fall upon the Holy Prophet at a given moment and strike him a mortal blow. In this way all the clans would share equally in the killing of the Prophet which would make it difficult for the Hashimites to avenge his death. When the Prophet learned of the evil intentions of the enemy he, in the company of Abu Bakr, quietly slipped out of Mecca in the secrecy of the night. They both took shelter in a nearby cave called Thaur.

For two days and two nights, the Prophet and Abu Bakr hid in the cave. On the third night, according to plan, two swift camels were brought to the cave and the party, including the Prophet, Abu Bakr and his servant rode towards Yathrib led by a guide. Yathrib is located about two hundred miles north of Mecca but the party chose a more westerly route, close to the coastline of the Red Sea.

When the Meccans discovered that the Prophet and Abu Bakr had escaped, they searched for them all around Mecca. Failing to find them, they offered a reward of a hundred camels for the capture of the two, dead or alive. Tempted by the reward, a bedouin chief, Suraqa bin Malik, went in pursuit of the party.

When Suraqa bin Malik sighted the party, he, according to the superstitious Arab custom of the time, consulted his arrows which bade ill-luck. The temptation of the reward, however, made him continue the pursuit. At this time his horse stumbled and he fell down. This was another sign for him. When eventually he caught up with the party, he told them of his evil intentions and the sudden change of heart. The Prophet let him go but made him promise not to reveal the party's whereabouts to anyone. Suraqa later narrated this incident, saying, that he was then convinced that the Prophet was a true one and

that he would definitely succeed in his mission. Suraqa requested the Prophet to write him a guaranty of peace when the Prophet became supreme. To this the Prophet agreed.

At that moment the Holy Prophet received a revelation and said to Suraqa,

"Suraqa, how will you feel with the gold bangles of the Chosroes on your wrists?"

Amazed at the prophecy, Suraqa asked,

"Which Chosroes? Chosroes, the Emperor of Iran?"

The Prophet replied, "Yes"

Sixteen or seventeen years later this prophecy was literally fulfilled. During the reign of the second Caliph, Umar, the Muslims conquered the Kingdom of Chosroes. When the spoils of the war were placed in front of Umar, he noticed the gold bangles which Chosroes used to wear on state occasions. Remembering the Prophet's words to Suraqa, he decided to make a visible fulfillment of the prophecy. He called for Suraqa and bade him wear the bangles. To this Suraqa protested since the wearing of gold by men was not permitted by the Prophet. Umar said that the occasion was an exception and that Suraqa will have to wear the bangles. To this Suraqa finally complied. The Holy Prophet was no longer in this world but the Muslims who were present saw the prophecy of the Messenger of God fulfilled in front of their own eyes.

Coming back to the migration, the Holy Prophet continued his journey towards Yathrib, where the people were eagerly awaiting his arrival. When he reached near Yathrib, he decided to stop for a while in Quba, a nearby village. He stayed in Quba for a few days and also laid the foundation of the first mosque ever built by the Muslims. Then he went on to Yathrib, where the people of the city had turned out in large numbers to welcome him.

This emigration of the Holy Prophet from Mecca to Yathrib is called the Hijrah and took place in June 622 A.D., some twelve years after the beginning of his mission. The Muslim calender, the Hijrah, dates from this event. With this migration the Meccan period of humiliation, persecution and restrictions finally came to an end and the years of success and religious freedom began.

LIFE AT MEDINAH

With the arrival of the Prophet, Yathrib changed its name to *al-Medinah-tu-Nabi,* the City of the Prophet. In the course of time it was shortened to *al-Medinah,* the City.

On arriving at Medinah, the Prophet took up residence at the house of Abu Ayub Ansari. Soon he sent his freed slave, Zayd, to Mecca to fetch his family and relatives. The Prophet also bought a vacant piece of land nearby and laid the foundation of a mosque. After this he built houses for himself and his companions.

The faithful followers of the Prophet who had left their homes and other worldly possessions in Mecca and had come to Medinah for the sake of Islam, were known as ***Muhajiroon*** or Emigrants. Their love for the Prophet was unbounded and they were also very dear to the Prophet. They numbered about seventy men at the time of the Prophet's arrival in Medinah.

The new converts at Medinah, who had helped the Prophet at a most difficult time, were called by him ***Ansar*** or Helpers. They numbered about one hundered. The Prophet formally established ties of mutual brotherhood between individuals of the two groups and asked each man among the Ansar to "adopt" a brother from among the Muhajiroon. This action not only welded the social ties between the two groups but also helped economically the refugees who had left all their possessions back in Mecca.

CONSTITUTION OF MEDINAH

On his arrival at Medinah, the Prophet devoted himself to the organization of the city. The Jews of Medinah were divided into three branches: Banu Qainuka, Banu Nadir and Banu Qurayzah. Prominent among the Arab tribes were Aws and Khazraj. There was strong rivalry among these various religious and political factions and mutual hostility often erupted in the form of fighting.

With the Muslims, the Jews and the idolatrous Arabs, the city of Medinah was divided into three religious groups. The Prophet realized

it quickly that a peaceful state could only exist if it was based on good-will and support of all sections of the society. The Prophet, therefore, formulated a charter for the people of Medinah which is also known as the Constitution of Medinah. According to this charter blood feud was abolished and all rights were given equally to all people. Some of the important points of this charter were:

1. All parties signing this charter will form a common nationality.
2. All parties to this agreement will remain united in peace or in war.
3. If any of the parties was attacked by an enemy, others would defend it with their combined forces.
4. None of the parties will give shelter to the Quraysh of Mecca or make any secret treaty with them.
5. The various parties to this ageement will be free to profess their own religion.
6. Bloodshed, murder and violence will be forbidden.
7. The city of Medinah will be regarded as sacred and any strangers who came under the protection of its citizens will be treated as citizens of Medinah.
8. All disputes will be referred to the Holy Prophet for decision.

ADHAN OR THE CALL TO PRAYER

In the early days of the Prophet's stay at Medinah, whenever the time of Prayer came, the Muslims assembled in the Prophet's Mosque without being called. Since there were no clocks or watches in those days, the Muslims could not come to Prayer at any fixed time. A strong need, therefore, arose to have the Muslims called to the Prayer. Various means to achieve this objective were considered by the Holy Prophet. The Jews used to call their people with a horn while the Christians used the bell. Even the lighting of fire, following the style of the Zoroastrians was considered.

After consultations with his Companions, the Holy Prophet finally decided in favour of an oral Call and asked Bilal, a freed Abyssinian

slave, to give the first Adhan. Bilal used to ascend to the roof of the house adjacent to the Prophet's Mosque and deliver the Call to Prayer from there.

THE INCIDENT AT NAKHLAH

One and a half years after Hijrah, the Holy Prophet sent nine persons towards the valley of Nakhlah in order to observe the movements of a Quraysh caravan. Abdullah bin Hajash was appointed the leader of this scouting team. It was the sacred month of Rajab when fighting was not permitted among the Arabs.

When the reconnoitering group reached Nakhlah and spotted the caravan, they conferred among themselves as to their course of action. Some of the Muslims did not like breaking the sanctity of the sacred month while others were opposed to letting the Quraysh escape unchecked. Finally, a consensus was reached to fight with the enemy.

During the fighting that ensued, Waqid bin Abdullah of the Muslims shot an arrow that killed Amrao bin Hazrami of the Quraysh. The Muslims took two prisoners and some booty and returned to Medinah.

When the Holy Prophet learned of this incident, he was highly grieved and refused to accept part of the booty presented to him. The two Meccan prisoners were eventually returned to the Quraysh in exchange for the two Muslims captured during the fighting.

THE BATTLE OF BADR

After losing the opportunity to kill the Holy Prophet, the Meccans now were really angry at the spread of Islam in Medinah. The Meccans started to interfere with the Muslims' right to pilgrimage and also instigated the people of Medinah against the Holy Prophet. They changed their normal caravan routes and started going through tribal areas around Medinah to rouse the tribes against the Muslims.

In the year 624 A.D., two years after the Hijrah, Abu Sufyan was bringing a commercial caravan back from Syria. The Muslim scouts were keeping an eye on the caravan just in case it posed any threat to

Medinah. After Abu Sufyan saw the Muslim scouts he became frightened and sent a messenger to Mecca to bring an adequate force to safe-guard the caravan.

When the chiefs of Mecca learned that their goods-laden caravan was in possible danger, they quickly gathered a well armed and well equipped army of more than a thousand warriors. The army set out from Mecca under the leadership of Abu Jahal to confront the Muslims. When the Holy Prophet learned of the Meccans' intentions, he gathered some 310 Muslims from among the Muhajiroon and Ansar and set forth from Medinah. The Muslims camped for the night at a place called Badr, a few miles south-west of Medinah. Early on the morning of March 13, 624 A.D., the Prophet arranged his small army into ranks and files and delivered a brief address on ***Jihad,*** the fighting in the cause of God.

Then, according to the Arab custom, three leaders of the Quraysh named Shaiba, Utba and Walid bin Utba challenged three Muslims to a single combat. Their challenge was accepted by Ali, Hamzah and Ubaidah. Ali and Hamzah overpowered their opponents but Obaidah and Walid exchanged several blows and both fell down, severely wounded.

After these single combats, a fierce battle broke out in which both sides fought bravely. While the Quraysh were fighting for their false pride and glory, the Muslims were fighting in the cause of Islam and for their very existence. Two young Ansars attacked Abu Jahal and mortally wounded him. Very soon the Quraysh were routed and took to thier heels. They were chased by the Muslims and some of them were made prisoners.

The Muslims lost fourteen men in the battle of Badr while the Quraysh lost seventy. The very first person to be slain among the Muslims in a pitched battle was Mahja bin Salih, a freed slave. He was given the title of "Chief of the Martyrs" by the Holy Prophet. A number of the Quraysh were taken prisoners by the Muslims. The Prophet ordered his followers to treat these prisoners of war with kindness. The Holy Prophet decided to liberate the prisones on payment of ransom. Those who could not pay the ransom but were literate, were allowed to earn their freedom by teaching ten Muslim children how to

read and write. Those who were poor and illiterate were released on the promise that they will not fight the Muslims in the future.

The battle of Badr was the first confrontation between the Muslims and the Meccans. The Muslims not only came out victorious, but some of the worst enemies of Islam such as Abu Jahal were also eliminated in the battle. This battle, therefore, marked a turning point in the history of Islam and considerably boosted the morale of the Muslims who, until then, had only known persecution and harassment.

The Muslims' victory at Badr could not be tolerated by the vendetta seeking Quraysh of Mecca and the hostile Jews of Medinah. Hind, the wife of Abu Sufyan and daughter of Utba, who had lost her father, her brother and her uncle in the battle, swore that she would not rest until another army was sent against Medinah. The Jews of Medinah were envious of the spreading influence of Islam and started openly opposing the Muslims and the Holy Prophet, though they had a treaty with them. Then there were the hypocrites who had outwardly accepted Islam but in their hearts sought ways and means to hurt the Muslims and spread discontent and disunity among their ranks. The leader of the hypocrites was a man by the name of Abdullah bin Ubayy bin Salul. He was the chief of the Khazraj tribe and, before the arrival of the Prophet in Medinah, was generally accepted as the chief of the city. He, therefore, greatly resented the Prophet's authority and, as later developments will show, tried his best in turning the people against the Prophet.

EXPULSION OF BANU QAINUKA FROM MEDINAH

After the Battle of Badr, the Jews started giving open expression to their feelings of hatred and jealousy against the Muslims. The relations between the Muslims and the three Jewish tribes began to deteriorate. An isolated case of a street fight between a few Muslims and Jews of Banu Qainuka eventually led to an open confrontation between the two groups. The Muslims marched towards the strongholds of Banu Qainuka in Medinah and besieged them for a fortnight. After this period, the Banu Qainuka surrendered on the condition that they,

their families and their animals be spared. The Prophet accepted these terms and the Banu Qainuka were expelled from Medinah.

BATTLE OF UHUD

The Quraysh of Mecca were smarting under their crushing defeat at Badr and could not tolerate the spread of Islam in Medinah. Moreover, the Meccans wanted to avenge the loss of some of their leaders, like Abu Jahal and Utba, who were killed in the battle of Badr at the hands of the Muslims.

The Quraysh, therefore, started to make preparations for another attack on Medinah. In the third year of the Hijrah, exactly one year after the battle of Badr, the Meccan army proceeded towards Medinah under the leadership of Abu Sufyan. The army consisted of some 3,000 soldiers and 200 horses.

In the month of March, year 625 A.D., the Prophet left Medinah with one thousand men and started marching towards Uhud to meet the enemy. Soon after leaving the city. Abdullah bin Ubayy deserted the Muslim army, taking his three hundred men with him. There were now only seven hundred Muslims left to face an enemy of three thousand strong.

Both armies camped near Mount Uhud, located a few miles north of Medinah. Next morning, the Prophet arranged the Muslim army in such a way that Mount Uhud was at their back. To further safeguard against a surprise attack from a small opening in the mountain, the Prophet appointed a batch of fifty archers to take up positions on a hill guarding this passage. These archers were instructed not to leave their positions until further orders.

During the first phase of the battle, a part of the Meccan army under the command of Ikrimah, son of Abu Jahal, advanced towards the Muslims from the front. The Muslims fought very bravely and overpowered the enemy which ran from the battle field. Thinking that the enemy was beaten, the Muslims started picking up the spoils of battle. The fifty archers, realizing that they may lose this opportunity, left their positions and also joined the plunder.

The ready eye of Khalid bin Walid, who had not yet accepted Islam

and was fighting from the Meccan side, saw the chance and attacked the Muslims from their rear. The Muslims at that time were disorganized and panicked, falling easy target to the Meccans' swords. The Holy Prophet tried to call his people together but a stone hurled at him broke his two teeth and he fell to the ground momentarily stunned. At that instant a rumour spread among the Muslims that the Prophet was killed. This further hightened the disarray of the Muslims who then ran from the battle field and took to the protection of the mountain.

Seventy Muslims lost their lives in this battle compared with a loss of only twenty-three by the enemy. The Prophet's uncle, Hamzah, was also killed during this battle by a spear thrown by Wahshi, an Abyssinian slave of Hind. Hind, the wife of Abu Sufyan, cut the belly of Hamzah's corpse and chewed his liver to satisfy her revenge for her father and brother who were killed in the battle of Badr at the hands of Hamzah.

After a mojor victory at Badr, the Muslims now suffered a big setback at Uhud. The reasons for their defeat were the military tactics of Khalid bin Walid, the lack of discipline among the Muslim ranks, negligence of the Prophet's orders by the archers, the love of plunder on the part of the Muslim army and the reduction of the Muslim forces by the desertion of Abdullah bin Ubayy.

EXPULSION OF BANU NADIR FROM MEDINAH

After the battle of Uhud, the two Jewish tribes remaining in Medinah, Banu Nadir and Banu Qurayzah, had a dispute regarding a mutual agreement. The matter went before the Holy Prophet who decided in favour of Banu Qurayzah. Banu Nadir resented this decision and, upon the instigation of Abdulah bin Ubayy, decided to kill the Holy Prophet.

The Prophet escaped from this attempt upon his life and ordered them to leave Medinah. Banu Nadir initially defied this order but gave in after a fortnight of siege. They were allowed to take their goods and chattel and were expelled from Medinah. Some of these people went to Syria while others settled in a place called Khyber where they continued their anti-Islamic activities.

THE MURDER OF MUSLIM MISSIONARIES

In the same year as the Battle of Uhud, 625 A.D., seven men of the Banu Qara tribe came to Medinah and asked the Holy Prophet to send some missionaries to their area to teach them the Holy Quran and Islam. The Holy Prophet had already started sending missionaries to the various tribes and this time sent six of his own Companions for this purpose.

When these six missionaries reached the place called ar-Raji belonging to the tribe of Banu Hudhayl, they were set upon by two hundred men. Four of the missionaries were killed in the fight and two, Zayd bin Dathinah and Khubayb, were taken prisoners and sold to the Meccans who intended to kill them to evenge the deaths of their own relatives in the Battle of Badr.

When Zayd was going to be beheaded, Abu Sufyan asked him:

> "Tell me, O Zayd, would you not prefer that Muhammad was here in your place to receive this punishment while you were safe at home with your people?"

Zayd replied:

> "I certainly prefer that Muhammad be where he is, safe from all harm. It is more preferable to me than my being with my own people."

Abu Sufyan was amazed at this answer and this display of love and loyalty by the Companions of the Holy Prophet for him. Zayd was beheaded.

When the other Muslim prisoner, Khubayb, was taken out to be executed in front of the people of Mecca, he asked for permission to say a Nafl Prayer, which he made very short. After completing his Prayer he told his executioner:

> "I wanted to prolong my Prayer but was afraid that you might think that I was not ready to die."

Soon after the incident of ar-Raji, a man named Abu Bara came to Medinah and asked for enlightenment in the religion of Islam. After being instructed in the new faith, Abu Bara requested the Holy

Prophet to send some *Huffaz,* the Memorizers of the Holy Quran, to the people of Najd to preach them Islam. The Holy Prophet was afraid for the lives of his Companions and turned down the request. But when Abu Bara gave personal guarantees for their protection, the Holy Prophet acceded to his request and sent with him seventy Muslim missionaries.

When these seventy missionaries reached a place called Bir Mauna, the cousin of Abu Bara instigated the local tribesmen against the Muslims. These tribesmen surrounded the Muslim missionaries and after a fight killed all of them with the exception of one man who managed to return to Medinah.

BATTLE OF THE DITCH

Although the Muslims were defeated at Uhud, their efforts to spread Islam continued with intense zeal, and their numbers kept on growing. With the growth of Islam the city of Medinah started to enjoy a status which rivaled that of Mecca. The Quraysh saw, in the growth of Islam, a real threat to their own religious and social position among the Arabs. At the same time the Jews expelled from Medinah were instigating the Quraysh against the Muslims.

Finally, in the year 627 A.D., some five years after the Hijrah, the Quraysh once again rounded up an army and marched upon Medinah under the leadership of Abu Sufyan. This time their forces numbered ten thousand men and six hundred horses. A number of Arab tribes joined league with the Meccans in this battle. For this reason this battle is also known as the Battle of the Confederates.

When the Prophet learned of this threat he gathered some three thousand men to face the enemy. On the advice of Salman al-Farsi, the Prophet decided to remain in the city and dug a long trench around that part of Medinah which gave an open access to the enemy. One side of Medinah had a natural protection of hills and another side was protected by stone houses and groves of trees.

When the Quraysh saw this defense, they were perplexed. They besieged the city and tried to storm it. But the Muslims easily repulsed the attack each time. Finally, the Quraysh decided that the only way to

enter the city was by making a secret alliance with the Jewish tribe of Banu Qurayzah. Since Banu Qurayzah already had a peace treaty with the Prophet, they refused this offer of the Meccans. On their persistence, however, they agreed to attack the Muslims from the rear while the Meccans engaged the Muslim army at the ditch. This secret plot of the Jews was discovered by the Muslims who then placed some five hundred soldiers on the Banu Qurayzah side of Medinah to guard against a surprise attack from that quarter.

Meantime, the Meccans were running short of their food supplies, the weather was turning adverse and a strong, cold wind had started to blow. Under the circumstances Abu Sufyan raised the siege and decided to return to Mecca.

Although the Battle of the Ditch was a mojor confrontation between the Quraysh and the Muslims, very little actual fighting took place. The Muslims lost five men while the enemy lost three.

BANU QURAYZAH PUNISHED

After the departure of the Meccan army, the Muslims turned their attention to Banu Qurayzah who had betrayed them during the battle of the Ditch. The Muslims laid siege to the Jews' fortress. When Banu Qurayzah could not hold out any longer, they sent a message to the Holy Prophet that they would surrender but would like their fate to be decided by one of their allies. Sa'd bin Muadh, the chief of the tribe of Aws, was appointed the arbiter. Sa'd passed the judgment on the Banu Quryzah according to the law of the Torah. According to the Jewish law the punishment for treason was death. In passing the death sentence on Banu Qurayzah, Sa'd reminded the Jews of the fact that had the Jews succeeded in carrying out their plan, they would have put all the Muslims to death.

As a result of Sa'd bin Muadh's judgment, all the male members of the Banu Qurayzah tribe who were of fighting age were executed and their women, children and elders expelled, who went to Syria.

Many historians have commented that the Banu Qurayzah made a tactical mistake in asking one of their own allies to decide their fate. The Mosaic Law was very strict in such matters and any person

honestly passing a judgment under this law could not be too lenient. The historians believe that if the Banu Qurayzah had entrusted their fate to the Prophet Muhammad himself, he would have definitely forgiven their excesses and, at the most, expelled them from Medinah.

CHARTER FOR THE CHRISTIANS

In the sixth year of the Hijrah, the Prophet granted to all Christians a charter. According to this charter:

- the Christians were not to be unfairly taxed
- no bishop was to be expelled from his monastery
- no pilgrim was to be detained from the performance of pilgrimage
- no Christian churches were to be pulled down for the building of mosques
- Christian women married to Muslims were free to enjoy their own religion
- in the case of repair of churches, the Muslims were to help the Christians

BAY'AT-E RIDHWAN AND THE TREATY OF HUDAYBIYA

By the year 628 A.D., some six long years had passed since the Muslims emigrated from Mecca. They were getting nostalgic and wanted to visit their homes. Also, many of the Muslims had not performed the pilgrimage since they left Mecca. Then one night the Holy Prophet dreamed that he was entering the Ka'ba and its key was in his hand. He told of this dream to his Companions and invited them to perform the "Umrah" or the Informal Pilgrimage. In February 628 A.D., the Holy Prophet left for Mecca in the company of 1,500 Muslims. It was the month of Dhul-Qadah, one of the four sacred months when war was unlawful throughout Arabia (the three other sacred months were : Rajab, Dhul-Hijjah and Muharram).

When the Quraysh learned of the approach of the Muslims, they

started making preparations for a confrontation and told the Muslims that they will not be allowed to enter Mecca and perform the pilgrimage.

The Muslims camped outside Mecca, in a place called Hudaybiya. The Holy Prophet dispatched Uthman as messenger to the Quraysh to inform them of the Muslims' intentions of only performing the pilgrimage. At that time a rumour spread out that Uthman had been murdered by the Quraysh and caused a great deal of commotion among the Muslims. Realizing the sensitivity of the occasion and the potential for an armed conflict with the Quraysh, the Holy Prophet sat down under a tree and asked his followers to offer an oath of allegience to him. They all submitted to it one by one declaring their resolve to fight to the bitter end for the cause of Islam. This oath of the Muslims at the hands of the Prophet is known as "Bay'at-e Ridhwan", or the Pledge of Acceptance.

The Quraysh became alarmed at this display of solidarity by the Muslims and decided to come to terms with them. Suhayl bin Amr and two other representatives of the Quraysh came to confer with the Holy Prophet. When an agreement was finally reached, the Holy Prophet asked Ali to write down the terms as he began to dictate them.

The Prophet started his dictation with the invocation *Bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Rahim*—in the name of God, the Gracious, the Merciful. At this Suhayl bin Amr objected saying that they did not know what Rahman was and, instead, proposed to write *Bismika Allahumma,* In Thy Name, O God. Some of the Prophet's Companions objected to this but the Prophet said to write it down.

The Holy Prophet then continued to dictate: "These are the terms of the truce between Muhammad, the Messenger of God and Suhayl the son of Amr". Suhayl protested again saying, "If we knew that you were the Messenger of God we would not be stopping you from performing the pilgrimage neither would we have fought with you; so write Muhammad the son of Abdullah." Ali by this time had already written the words Messenger of God. The Prophet asked him to strike them out and write in their place "the son of Abdullah".

This treaty between the Muslims and the Meccans is known as the

Treaty of Hudaybia and according to its terms:

1. There was to be no fighting for a period of ten years.
2. Any one who wished to join the Prophet's side was free to do so and any one who wished to join the Meccans, was free to do so.
3. If a young man from among the Quraysh joined the Prophet, he would be returned to his parents or guardians. If a young man from among the Muslims joined the Quraysh, he would not be returned.
4. That year, the Muslims will go back without performing the pilgrimage.
5. Next year, the Prophet and his followers could enter Mecca for a period of three days and perform the pilgrimage. During this period the Quraysh would withdraw from the city.
6. When the Muslims entered Mecca next year, they would be unarmed.

On the surface the Treaty of Hudaybia apppeared humiliating for the Muslims and Umar could not contain his feelings. He went to the Holy Prophet and Said:

"Are you not God's Prophet?" to which the Prophet replied "Yes".

"Are we not in the right and our enemies in the wrong?" asked Umar. To this the Prophet replied "Yes".

"Then why do we yield in such low fashion?" Umar asked again.

The Prophet replied: "I am God's Messenger and I will not disobey Him. He will give me the victory".

"But didn't you tell us", Umar persisted, "that we should go to the Ka'ba and perform the pilgrimage?"

"Yes" replied the Prophet, "but did I tell you it would have to be this year?"

The Treaty of Hudaybia gave the Muslims much needed peace and calm in which to concentrate their efforts on the spread of Islam. Great warriors like Khalid bin Walid and Amr bin A's, embraced

Islam after the treaty of Hudaybiya. The success of Islam after the treaty can be recognized from the fact that at the time of the treaty there were only 1,500 men with the Holy Prophet, but two years later, at the time of the conquest of Mecca, they were ten thousand.

THE HOLY PROPHET SENDS LETTERS TO VARIOUS KINGS

On returning to Medinah after the treaty of Hudaybiya, the Holy Prophet sent envoys to various kings and rulers. Each envoy carried a letter from the Prophet, inviting the ruler to accept Islam. These envoys were sent to:

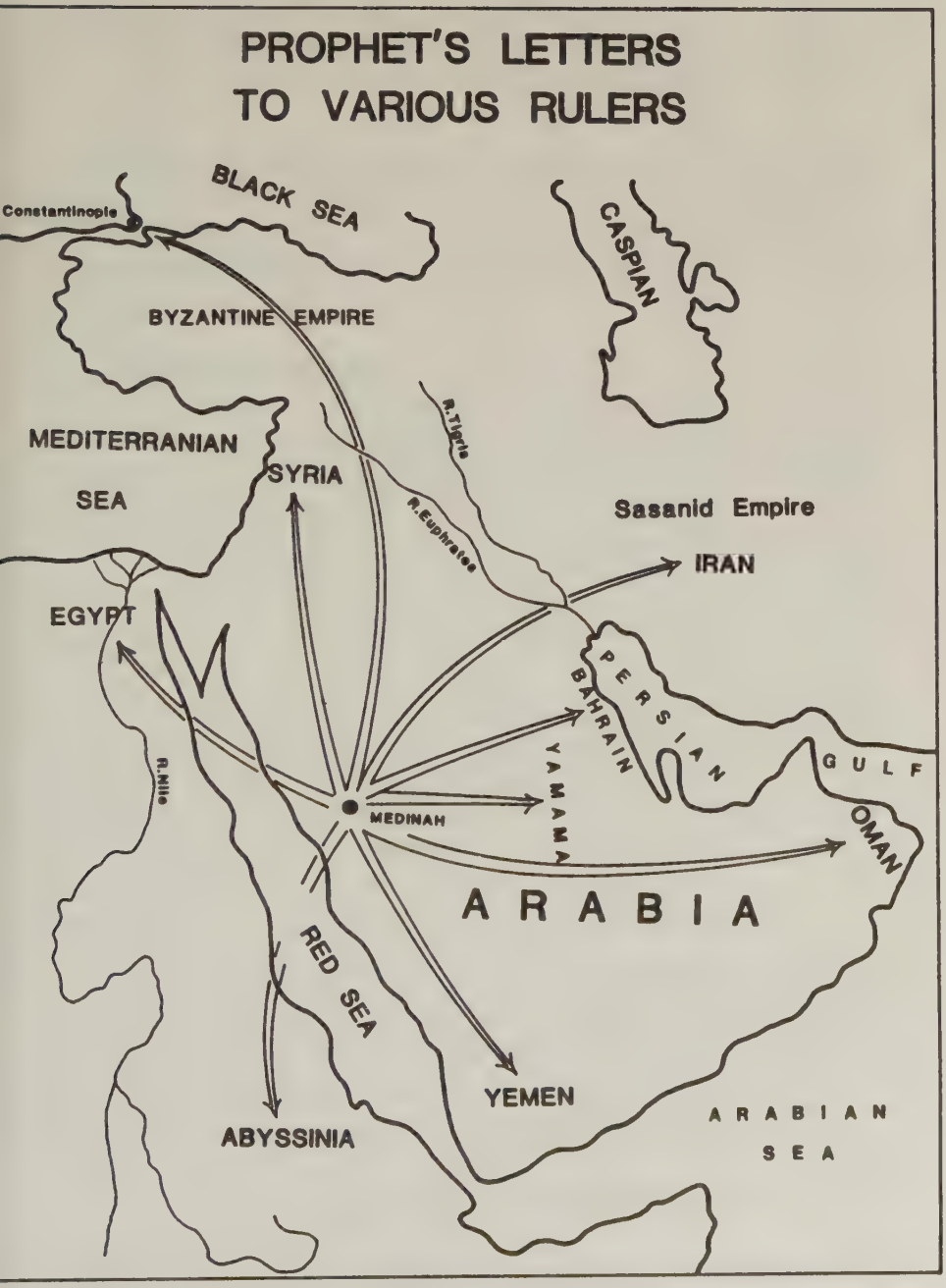
- Heraclius, the Emperor of the Byzantine Empire
- Chosroes Parvez, the Emperor of Iran
- Negus (Najjashi), the King of Abyssinia
- Muqauqis, the ruler of Egypt
- Mundhir Taimi, the chief of Bahrain
- al-Harith bin Abi Shimr, the Ghassanid Prince of Damascus
- Hawdah bin Ali, the chief of Yamamah
- King of Oman

The Prophet also wrote such letters to the chiefs of many other tribes around Arabia such as:

- Chief of Banu Nahd, a tribe of Yemen
- Chief of Hamadaan, another tribe of Yemen
- Chief of Banu Alim
- Chief of Hadrami tribe

The Letter to Heraclius

The letter addressed to Heraclius was delivered to him while the Emperor was visiting Syria. The envoy carrying the letter was called to the King's court and the letter was read to the King by an interpreter. The King wanted to know if an Arab caravan was visiting Syria so that he could question an Arab about this Arabian Prophet. It so happened that Abu Sufyan, an enemy of the Prophet, was in town and was taken to the King's court. The conversation that took place between the King


PROPHET'S LETTERS
TO VARIOUS RULERS
Constantinople
BLACK SEA
CASPIAN
BYZANTINE EMPIRE
MEDITERRANIAN
SEA
SYRIA
R.Tigris
R.Euphrates
Sasanid Empire
IRAN
EGYPT
PERSIAN
BAHRAIN
GULF
R.Nile
YAMAMA
MEDINAH
OMAN
ARABIA
RED SEA
YEMEN
ABYSSINIA
ARABIAN
SEA

and Abu Sufyan has been recorded in the books of Hadith, as follows:

King: What sort of family does this Prophet come from?

A.S.: He comes of a noble family and is one of my relations.

King: Have any Arabs before him made similar claims?

A.S.: No.

King: Did your people ever find him telling a lie before this?

A.S.: No.

King: Has there been a king or ruler among his forefathers?

A.S.: No.

King: Who are his followers? Rich or the poor people?

A.S.: Mostly poor, humble and young people.

King: Are their numbers increasing or decreasing?

A.S.: Increasing.

King: Do his followers ever go back to their old beliefs?

A.S.: No.

King: Has he ever broken a pledge?

A.S.: No.

King: What does he teach?

A.S.: He teaches that we should worship One God and not set up equals to Him. He preaches against the worshiping of idols. He wants us to speak the truth and give up all evil and corrupt practices. He tells us to be good to one another, keep our promises and discharge our trusts.

King: It seems to me that his claim to prophethood is true. I was half expecting his apperance in our time but I did not know that he was going to be an Arab. If what you have told me is true, then I think his influence and his rule will definitely spread over these lands.

The Letter to Chosroes Pervez

The letter sent to Chosroes, the Emperor of Iran, got a different kind of reception. The Emperor ordered an interpreter to read the

letter to him. On listening to the contents, the Emperor flew into a rage and tore the letter into pieces. When the Prophet's envoy reported this incident back to him, the Holy Prophet said:

> "What Chosroes has done to our letter, God will do to his Empire"

Chosroes even issued orders for the arrest of the Prophet. The Emperor was soon murdered by his own son who cancelled the orders for the Prophet's arrest. The Kingdom of Iran fell in a few years in front of the Muslim forces sent out during the reign of Umar, the second Khalifah of the Holy Prophet.

The Letter to Negus

The letter sent to Negus, King of Abyssinia, received an honourable reception. The King showed great respect for the letter and ordered an ivory box for it, saying:

> "While this letter is safe, my Kingdom is safe"

The Letter to Muqauqis

When the Prophet's letter was received by Muqauqis, the Christian ruler of Egypt, he questioned the envoy regarding the Holy Prophet. Muqauqis did not accept Islam but, very diplomatically, he wrote a letter to the Holy Prophet in reply sending with it presents of gold, two Egyptian girls, garments of Egyptian linen and a mule.

The Letter to Mundhir

The envoy carrying the letter to Mundhir, Chief of Bahrain, was the most successful of all envoys sent out by the Holy Prophet. When Mundhir received the Prophet's letter, he and many of his friends and followers accepted Islam. The Chief also wrote to the Holy Prophet for further instructions for his people.

THE CONQUEST OF KHYBER

Five months after returning from Hudaybiya, the Prophet learned of the rebellion of the Jews of Khyber. Since the expulsion of the Jews

from Medinah, many had settled down in Khyber and continued their nefarious activities against the Muslims. They instigated and aroused against Islam the Christian tribes settled on the southern frontier of the Roman Empire, the Arab tribes around Medinah and even Chosroes of Iran.

In August 628 A.D., the Prophet marched towards Khyber with 1,600 of his followers. At Khyber, a number of small forts fell one after the other and, after a heavy contest, their main fortress, al-Qamus, was also captured. The Jews being helpless, asked for the Prophet's pardon. He not only forgave them but also returned their land and properties with complete freedom to practice their faith. A fixed land tax, however, was imposed upon them.

Some 18 Muslims were killed in this Battle while the Jews lost 93 men.

THE THREE DAY PILGRIMAGE

Next year, in 629 A.D., Prophet Muhammad visited Mecca according to the terms of the treaty of Hudaybiya. Many Muslims accompanied him this time to perform the pilgrimage. When the Quraysh learned of the Prophet's approach, they, too, left the city according to the agreement. The Holy Prophet and his followers performed the Umrah or the Lesser Pilgrimage and after three days, returned to Medinah.

BATTLE OF MUTAH

On return from his three-day pilgrimage, the Prophet learned that the Christian tribes on the Syrian border were becoming hostile. The Prophet, therefore, sent a letter with an envoy to the Ghassanid Prince at Damascus, complaining about these hostilities. The Ghassanid Prince ruled that area in the name of Rome. While on his way the envoy was intercepted and murdered at Mutah by a Christian chieftain named Shurahbil.

To put an end to these continuing hostilities, the Prophet raised a force of 3,000 men and dispatched it towards Syria under the command of Zayd bin Harith, the freed slave and adopted son of the

Holy Prophet. The Byzantine army, it is estimated, was close to one hundred thousand strong.

The Muslim army marched away in September 629 A.D. and covered over six hundred miles to reach Mutah. It was the largest and most arduous expedition ever undertaken by the Muslims and the first one against the Christians. When the Muslims saw the size of the Christian army, they wanted to send word back to Medianh for reinforcement. However, the distance to Medinah was too great and the Muslim leaders decided to fight with whatever soldiers they had.

As the battle started, Zayd, the commander of the Muslim forces, was killed and the flag and command passed on to Jafar bin Abu Talib. Soon after, Jafar also fell and the command passed to Abdullah bin Rawah, as the Holy Prophet had instructed. Soon, Abdullah bin Rawah also fell. At this point Khalid bin Walid picked up the flag of the Muslim army and continued fighting till evening came.

Next, day, Khalid bin Walid took his exhausted army and the battle continued for a while. The Muslims, however, were grossly outnumbered and continuing the fighting any longer would have been suicidal. Khalid bin Walid, therefore, gathered the leftover of his army, executed a retreat and returned to Medinah. The Muslims at Medinah chided the returning army and scolded them for not fighting till their death. The Prophet, however, defended the army's action and praised Khalid bin Walid for his bravery giving him the title of *Saif-Allah*—the sword of God.

Because of the timely retreat of the Muslim army, not very many people were killed in this battle.

THE CONQUEST OF MECCA

In the treaty of Hudaybiya it was agreed that any tribe wanting to join the Muslims or the Quraysh was free to do so. As a result, the Khuza tribe joined the Muslims while the Banu Bakr entered into an alliance with the Meccans.

Some two years after the treaty, the Banu Bakr tribe, with the help of the Quraysh, raided the Khuza tribe by night and killed a number of

their men. The Khuza tribe sent a deputation of about forty men to the Holy Prophet, demanding help and justice. The Prophet sent a peace mission to the Quraysh proposing that:

(a) the Quraysh pay proper compensation to the Khuza tribe, or

(b) the Quraysh cut off all relations with the Banu Bakr, or

(c) the Quraysh declare the treaty of Hudaybiya as null and void.

The Quraysh neither wanted to pay compensation nor break away their relationship with the agressor tribe of Banu Bakr. They, therefore, accepted the third alternative. With the agreement now dissolved between the Muslims and the Meccans, the Prophet realized that there was no other way to render justice except by fighting the Quraysh. In January 630 A.D., the Prophet advanced towards Mecca with an army of ten thousand men. This was the largest force Medinah had ever seen. On reaching Mecca, the Muslim army camped outside the city.

Abu Sufyan, the leader of the Quraysh, came out during the night with two companions to see the Muslim camp. He was astounded at the size of the Muslim army and could hardly contain his amazement. The Muslim ranks which numbered about three hundred at the battle of Badr a few years ago had now swollen to nearly ten thousand.

While Abu Sufyan and his companions were scouting around, they were captured by the Muslim guards and brought in front of the Holy Prophet. The Prophet not only pardoned his lifelong enemy but also allowed him to spend the night in the Muslim camp. Abu Sufyan was amazed at the discipline of the Muslims and their love for the Holy Prophet. Abu Sufyan made a remark at the time that:

> "I have seen great courts. I have seen the courts of Chosroes and that of Kaiser, but I have never seen any people so devoted to their leader as the Muslims are to their Prophet."

By sunrise, Abu Sufyan and his companions had accepted Islam. They, however, were concerned about the fate of Mecca and asked the Holy Prophet as to what would the Muslims do to the Meccans. The Prophet replied:

> "These people have been very cruel. They have gone back on

> the peace they signed at Hudaybiya and attacked the Khuza tribe. They have made war in a place which had been made sacred by God"

Abu Sufyan and his companions asked the Holy Prophet for forgiveness and enquired if the Meccans could have peace if they did not draw their swords. The Prophet replied:

> "Everyone who stays indoors will have peace. Whoever takes shelter in the house of Abu Sufyan will have peace. Whoever enters the Sacred Mosque will have peace. Those who lay their arms will have peace."

In the morning, Abu Sufyan returned to Mecca with this message while the Muslim army started marching into the city. The Holy Prophet gave strict orders to his generals not to permit any fighting unless the enemy fought first.

The Prophet went straight to the Ka'ba and performed the circuit seven times. Then he ordered that the Ka'ba be cleared of all idols and paintings. The idols were broken and the walls of the Ka'ba cleansed of all pictures. After this, the Holy Prophet went inside the Ka'ba and said his Prayer there.

The Holy Prophet then addressed the Meccans and told them that they will not be called to account. Ikrimah, the son of Abu Jahal, was in the process of escaping to Abyssinia when he learned of this general amnesty. He could not believe his ears and had to ask the Holy Prophet himself, who replied, "Yes, I have forgiven you". Utbah and Mu'attib, the two surviving sons of Abu Lahab, were afraid to appear before the Prophet. Utbah had divorced Ruqayyah, the Prophet's daughter, under pressure from his father. The Holy Prophet took Abu Lahab's sons by their hands and walked to the wall of the Ka'ba where he prayed for a long time. On returning he said, "I asked my Lord to give me these two sons of my uncle, and He has given them to me". Both these sons embraced Islam.

All historians agree that in the history of conquests there has never been a more triumphant entry than this one. Hardly any blood was shed and all the enemies were pardoned. The Muslims had been tortured in this city and were eventually driven out of it. The residents of

this city had not let the Muslims live in peace even in Medinah and had waged many battles against them. But on this day, when the enemy lay helpless, defeated and at the mercy of the Muslims, a general forgiveness was declared and no revenge was taken. Such examples of greatness are truly rare in the history of conquests.

BATTLE OF HUNAYN

Immediately after the conquest of Mecca, the Muslims had to fight the Hawazin and Thaqif tribes which dwelt in the area east of Mecca. These two tribes invited a number of other tribes in the area to join them in battle against the Muslims.

This battle between the Muslims and the Hawazin and allied tribes was fought in the valley of Hunayn. When the Muslim army entered the valley, the enemy archers rained arrows from the surrounding cliffs where they lay hidden. The beasts of the Muslim army took fright and ran in spite of the riders. There was a time when the Prophet was left with only a handful of companions. When his companions tried to stop him from going ahead, he scorned the proposal and said:

"I am a Prophet, it is no lie;
Yet I am the son of Abdul Muttalib."

At this moment the thunderous voice of Abbas, the Prophet's uncle, rang out in the valley telling the Muslims that their Prophet had stood his ground and was calling for help. The Muslims then gathered together and drove the enemy from the battle field.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE BOOTY AND THE ANSAR'S UNHAPPINESS

The victory at Hunayn gave the Muslims their largest spoils of war. These spoils consisted of camels, goats and silver and were divided into five equal portions. Four of these portions were distributed among the Muslim army and one portion was reserved for the Muslim Treasury to be used as the Holy Prophet saw fit.

From this fifth portion, the Holy Prophet gave generously to some of the newly converted leaders of the Quraysh such as Abu Sufyan,

Muawiah, Harith bin Harith, Harith bin Hisham, Suhayl bin Amr and some others, all of whom had been staunch opponents of Islam before the conquest of Mecca.

The Ansar felt left out and grieved at this act of generosity towards the new converts and some of them gave voice to their feelings. When the Holy Prophet learned of their resentment, he asked for them to be assembled. When they had all gathered in front of him, the Prophet addressed them:

> "O Ansar! It has been reported to me that you do not approve of my distribution of the booty. Is it not true that when I came to you, you were languishing in misguidance and error, and God guided you to the truth through me? And is it not true that I found you in a state of poverty, and God made you affluent? And is it not true that I found you enemy one of another, and God reconciled your hearts?

After listening to each sentence of the admonition, the Ansar would say, "Indeed! God and His Prophet have been very generous." The Holy Prophet then continued:

> "Why don't you say this O Ansar, 'It was you, Muhammad, who were under our obligation. Did you not come to us vanquished and defeated, and we came to your rescue? Did you not come to us exiled and rejected, and we gave you shelter? Did you not come to us in want and need, and we came to your help?
>
> "Had you replied to me in these words, you would have said nothing but the truth and I would have agreed with you. O Ansar, are you angry because I gave away some goods to those whom I sought to win to Islam? Because I considered that their faith could be confirmed by material goods, whereas I considered yours to be based on solid conviction?
>
> "Does this not satisfy you, O Ansar, that when other people return home loaded with goods and camels, you will return home with the Prophet of God? By Him Who controls Muhammad's soul, there is no people to whom I love to belong more than the Ansar."

The Holy Prophet said these words in great love and affection for the men of Ansar who had pledged their unswerving loyalty and allegience to him, and had helped him at the most critical stage in his mission.

When the Ansar heard these words of great affection and sincerity from the Prophet's mouth, they burst into tears and they all shouted with one voice, "We want only Muhammad, the Prophet of God."

CAMPAIGN OF TABUK

In the summer of year 630 A.D., rumours spread out in Medinah that the Byzantine army was gathering in the southern part of Syria, ready to attack Medinah. Later events showed that these rumours were cleverly spread by the hypocrites in Medinah who wanted to provoke the Muslims against the Roman Empire.

The previous encounter with the Byzantine forces at Mutah was still fresh in the minds of the Muslims who showed some reluctance in joining this campaign. The Prophet finally prepared an army of thirty-thosand men and marched towards Syria. After reaching Tabuk, the Prophet stayed there a few days and not finding any signs of the enemy, returned to Medinah. The journey took the Muslim army about two and a half months and was the last campaign undertaken by the Holy Prophet in his life.

After his return from Tabuk, a large number of deputations from various tribes and states came to medinah to offer their allegience to the Prophet. They came from Oman, Hadramawt, Hamdan, Kindah, Bahrain, Yamamah and many other provinces of Arabia. In fact so remarkable was the movement of these deputaitons towards Medinah that the ninth year of the Hijrah is known as the "Year of Deputations".

THE FAREWELL PILGRIMAGE AND THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

In the year 632 A.D., the Holy Prophet felt that his mission was nearing completion, and understanding that the end of his life was

near, he decided to make a farewell pilgrimage to Mecca. After completing the various ceremonies of the Hajj, the Prophet addressed the people gathered there from the top of the Mount of Mercy, in the Plain of Arfat:

"O people, listen to my words; for I do not know if I shall be among you after this year. Remember that you have to appear before your Lord Who will demand from you an account of all your actions.

"O people, you have rights over your wives and your wives have rights over you. Remeber, you must always treat your wives with kindness. Woman is weak and cannot protect her own rights. When you married, God appointed you the trustees of those rights. You brought your wives to your homes under the Law of God. You must not, therefore, insult the trust which God has placed in your hands.

"O people, feed your slaves as you feed yourselves and clothe your slaves as you clothe youselves. If they commit a fault which you are unable to forgive, then pass them on to someone else. They are part of God's creation and are not to be harshly treated.

"O people, listen to my words, and remember that all Muslims are brothers one of another. As you are one brotherhood, you will not take your brother's belongings which he does not give you of his own goodwill. And guard yourself against committing injustice.

"O people, take note that I trample under foot all unIslamic customs and traditions. All blood feuds are wiped out. As God has made you one brotherhood, so be not divided. An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab, nor a non-Arab over an Arab; nor is a white one to be preferred to a dark one, nor a dark one to a white one. This day, retaliation for all murders committed in the days of ignorance is cancelled and all sums of interest are remitted.

"O people, worship your Lord, observe Prayer, observe the Fast during Ramadhan, pay the Zakat cheerfully, perform the

Pilgrimage, and obey those in authority among you; God will admit you to His paradise"

And he concluded:

"What I have said to you, you shall tell the others who are not present"

With these words the Prophet finished his address when a revelation came to him:

"This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed upon you my favour and have chosen for you Islam as Religion (5:4)

This is believed to be the last revelation received by the Holy Prophet and with it the process of Quranic revelaions, spanning a period of twenty-two years, came to a close.

THE PROPHET'S ILLNESS

Two months after returning from the farewell pilgrimage, the Holy Prophet fell ill. One day, after having led the Prayer, he addressed the people present in the mosque. He said, "There is a slave among the slaves of God to whom God has offered the choice between this world and that which is with Him. And the slave has chosen that which is with God." When Abu Bakr heard these words, he began to weep; for he understood that the Holy Prophet was speaking of himself and that the choice he referred to was his imminent death. The Holy Prophet continued, "O people, the most beneficent of men unto me in companionship and generosity has been Abu Bakr; and if I were to select from all mankind an inseparable friend, he would be Abu Bakr. But real companionship and brotherhood is ours when God unites us all in His presence".

When the Prophet became so ill that he could not even come to the mosque, he asked that Abu Bakr lead the daily Prayers. A'isha knew that her father was very sensitive and prone to weeping and would be greatly distressed taking the Prophet's place. She, therefore, suggested Umar's name instead. But the Holy Prophet insisted that it be Abu Bakr.

One day the Prophet was feeling a little better so he asked to be taken to the mosque. Ibn Abbas and Ali supported him from each side and, with his feet dragging on the ground, took him to the mosque. Abu Bakr had already started leading the Prayer. As Ibn Abbas and Ali took the Prophet to the front row, the people tried to give Abu Bakr a hint by clapping their hands. Abu Bakr, however, was too engrossed in the Prayer and did not take any notice. Finally he became aware of the Prophet's presence behind him and wanted to move back. The Prophet, however, indicated to him to continue leading the Prayer and asked Ibn Abbas and Ali to put him down next to Abu Bakr. The Prayer then continued in such a manner that Abu Bakr was following the Holy Prophet seated next to him while the people behind were following Abu Bakr. After the Prayer was over the Prophet asked Abu Bakr why didn't he continue leading the Prayer after he was asked to do so. Abu Bakr replied, "How dare the son of Abu Qahafa lead the Prayer in the presence of the Messenger of God."

As the Prophet's illness advanced, he requested his wives to allow him to spend his last days with A'isha, to which they all agreed. One day Fatimah, his daughter, came to see him. A'isha saw the Holy Prophet whisper something in Fatimah's ear, upon which Fatimah began to cry. Then he whispered something else in her ear, which made her smile through her tears. When A'isha queried Fatimah on what the Holy Prophet was whispering to her, she answered that it was a secret not to be divulged. Much later, she told A'isha that the Holy Prophet had informed her that he was going to die in that illness and this had made her cry. Then the Holy Prophet told her that she, Fatimah, would be the first from the Prophet's house to join him, and this had cheered her up.

The Prophet's Mosque in Medinah was adjacent to his residence. One day the Prophet stood by the window and looked outside at the Muslims getting ready to say their Fajr Prayers behind Abu Bakr. The people looked at the Holy Prophet's face and waited for him to join them. He smiled at them and indicated with his hand for Abu Bakr to go ahead with the Prayer. That was the last time the Muslims saw their Prophet's face; that day at noon, the Holy Prophet passed away. On June 8, 632 A.D., the Holy Prophet was buried and thus ended the

glorious career of the Prophet of Islam, the greatest man of Arabia, indeed of the whole world.

When Umar was told of the Prophet's death, he did not believe it. He always thought that the Holy Prophet was going to outlive all of them. He, therefore, proceeded to the mosque and started telling the people that the Prophet was merely absent in spirit and will return soon.

When Abu Bakr heard the sad news, he went straight to his daughter A'isha's house and drew back the cloak which covered the Prophet's face. He looked at the face of his departed friend and then bent down and kissed it. "Dearer than my father and mother," he said, "thou hast tasted the death which God decreed for thee. Thou art too precious with the Lord for another death to befall thee."

After this, Abu Bakr went out where Umar was still addressing the people. He asked Umar to be quiet but Umar paid no attention. Finally Abu Bakr started to speak to the people himself:

> "O people, whosoever worships Muhammad, let him then know that Muhammad is dead. But whosoever worships God, let him know that the Lord is living and does not die"

Abu Bakr then recited the following Quranic verses which were revealed after the Battle of Uhud:

> ***"And Muhammad is only a Messenger. Verily, Messengers have passed away before. If then he dies or is slain, will you turn back on your heels?"*** (3 : 145)

Abu Bakr's words put a hush on the crowd. Umar himself was astounded. When realization finally sank in that the Holy Prophet was really dead, his legs could not carry him and Umar fell to the ground.

The Holy Prophet's body was bathed and laid out in the chamber of A'isha where he had died. Next morning, the inhabitants of Medinah came and visited it, praying over his remains. Abu Bakr and Umar entered the chamber and prayed as follows:

> "Peace be upon thee, O Prophet of God, and mercy from the Lord and His blessing. We bear witness that the Prophet of God has delivered the Message revealed to him; has fought in

the way of God until God gave his religion victory; has fulfilled his words, has drawn us to himself, and been kind and tenderhearted towards the believers; has sought no recompense for delivering the Faith to us, neither has he sold it for a price at any time."

In the evening, the final rites were performed and the body was buried in a grave dug in A'isha's chamber, at the same place where the Prophet had breathed his last. Later on, when Abu Bakr died, he was buried in the same chamber and, in due time, Umar as well. Thus was fulfilled a dream of A'isha that three moons fell, one after another, into her chamber.

WIVES OF THE HOLY PROPHET

1. KHADIJAH (Marriage: 595 A.D.)

A fairly well to do lady of Mecca, Khadijah was twice widowed, and fifteen years his senior, when she married the Prophet Muhammad. Her former husbands were named Abu Halah and Ateek.

Her marriage with the Holy Prophet lasted twenty-five years—fifteen years before and ten years after the beginning of his prophetic-mission. As long as the Holy Prophet was married to Khadijah, he did not take any other wife.

Khadijah died about two years before the Hijrah when the Holy Prophet was fifty years old. She was buried in Mecca. Khadijah was the Prophet's only wife who bore him children that lived past infancy.

The Prophet's love and regard for Khadijah was so great that even after her death the manner in which he remembered her often made even the likes of A'isha very jealous. On one occasion Khadijah's younger sister, Halah, came to visit the Holy Prophet. When he heard her voice he became startled and remarked:

"It must be Halah; her voice is so much like Khadijah's."

At this A'isha could no longer control herself and remarked:

"How come, you always think of the old woman who is dead, while God has given you better wives?"

The Holy Prophet replied:

> "It is not so. When people rejected me she stood by me; when people disbelieved, she believed and accepted Islam; when I had no support, she helped me."

2. SAUDAH (Marriage: 620 A.D.)

Saudah held the distinction of being the first lady the Holy Prophet married after the death of Khadijah. At the time of her marriage to the Holy Prophet Saudah was a widow of nearly fifty years of age. The name of her former husband was Sakran who was an early convert to Islam. Both of them had migrated to Abyssinia but had returned to Mecca about the time Khadijah died. Very soon afterwards Sakran died, leaving Saudah a widow.

At the time of Khadijah's death, two younger daughters of the Holy Prophet—Umm al-Kalthum and Fatimah—were still young and unmarried. At the suggestion of the wife of one of his Companions, the Holy Prophet married Saudah to be relieved of domestic worry.

The marriage took place in Mecca, a few months after Khadijah's death. When the Holy Prophet migrated to Medinah, Saudah also joined him there. She died in 22 A.H. during the Khilafat of Umar.

3. A'ISHA (Marriage: 622 A.D.)

A'isha was the daughter of Abu Bakr and his wife Zaynab (Umm Ruman). At the time of the Prophet's marriage to Saudah, the name of A'isha was also brought to his attention. But A'isha was then engaged to Jubayr bin Mutim. Later on Jubayr—who had not embraced Islam—broke the engagement due to Abu Bakr's close companionship with the Holy Prophet.

After her engagement with Jubayr was dissolved, the Holy Prophet married A'isha with Abu Bakr performing the "nikah" ceremony. The marriage, however, was not consummated till after the Prophet's migration to Medinah.

A'isha spent nine years with the Holy Prophet and died in 57 A.H., at the age of sixty-six years. She was buried in the graveyard in

Medinah, known as *Jannat-ul Baqi.*

A'isha was very dear to the Holy Prophet not only because of her youthfulness but also because of her intelligence, quick-wittedness and piety. More than one-quarter of all the Hadiths quoted by the great compilers of the Prophet's Tradition are from A'isha.

4. HAFSAH (Marriage : 624 A.D.)

Hafsah was the daughter of Umar bin Khattab. The Holy Prophet married her in the third year of the Hijrah, soon after her former husband, Khumays, died of wounds sustained in the Battle of Badr.

Hafsah was a very learned lady, and the standard text of the Holy Quran, in the sequence laid down by the Holy Prophet, was kept in her custody.

Hafsa died in 45 A.H., at the age of sixty and was buried in the *Jannat-ul Baqi.*

5. ZAYNAB BINT KHUZAYMAH (Marriage: 625 A.D.)

Zaynab was first married to Tufayl bin Harith who had divorced her. She then married Abdullah bin Hajash who became a martyr in the Battle of Uhud. In considerartion of her bereavement, several Muslims offered to marry her but she declined them all. However, when the Holy Prophet proposed to her she accepted the honour. The marriage took place soon after the Battle of Uhud, in 3 A.H. She was thirty years old at the time.

Zaynab bint Khuzaymah, however, did not live long and died within two or three months after her marriage. Besides Khadijah, Zaynab bint Khuzaymah was the only other wife of the Holy Prophet who died within his lifetime. The funeral prayer was performed by the Holy Prophet himself, and Zaynab was buried in the *Jannat-ul Baqi.*

6. UMM SALMAH (Marriage: 626 A.D.)

Her real name was Hind and she was the daughter of Suhayl and Atikah. She was first married to Abdullah bin Abdul Asad who had

taken the "kuniyat" of Abu Salmah.

Both Umm Salmah and her husband had embraced Islam in the early years of the Prophet's mission and were also among the first emigrants to Abyssinia. Later on they returned to Mecca and after the Holy Prophet's migration to Medinah, followed him there.

Abu Salmah suffered some bad wounds in the Battle of Uhud and eventually succumbed to blood-poisoning some eight months later. Umm Salmah was a mature lady with four children when she became a widow.

When the Holy Prophet proposed to her, she initially made some excuses regarding her advanced age and having many children but later on accepted the honour. They were married around 4-5 A.H.

Umm Salmah died in 63 A.H., at the age of eighty-four, and was the last of the Prophet's surviving wives. She was buried in the *Jannat-ul Baqi,* alongside the Prophet's other wives.

7. JUWAYRIAH (Marriage: 626 A.D.)

Formerly known as Barrah, Juwayriah was the daughter of Harith, the Chief of the Banu Musta'liq tribe. She was married to Musafi who lost his life fighting against the Muslims in the Expedition of Banu Musta'liq, in the fifth year of the Hijrah.

With the defeat of the Banu Musta'liq, a large amount of booty and prisoners of war came into the hands of the Muslims. Juwayriah fell to the lot of a warrior who demanded as ransom quantity of gold beyond her means to pay. She then came to the Holy Prophet beseeching him for help. He offered to marry her to which she, as well as her master, agreed. She was about twenty years old at the time.

When the Muslim warriors learned of this marriage, they freed all captives of the Banu Musta'liq clan since they had all now become relavtives of the Holy Prophet by virtue of his marriage to Juwayriah.

Juwayriah died in 50 A.H., at the age of sixty-five. She was also buried in the *Jannat-ul Baqi* in Medinah.

8. ZAYNAB BINT JAHSH (Marriage : 626 A.D.)

Zaynab was the daughter of Umaymah, a sister of the Prophet's father Abdullah and thereby a cousin of the Holy Prophet. She belonged to the noble clan of Hashim and was proud of this fact.

When the Prophet launched his drive for Islamic brotherhood and tried to remove all signs of racial and ethnic superiority, he arranged the marriage of his cousin Zaynab to his freed slave, Zayd.

Zaynab, however, could never get adjusted to the idea of marrying a freed slave and her marriage with Zayd eventually led to a divorce due to mutual incompatibility.

Since the Holy Prophet had been responsible for arranging her marriage and had guaranteed her upkeep, he decided to marry her himself. Zaynab was about thirty-eight years old at the time and the marriage took place in the fifth year of the Hijrah.

Zaynab was the most generous of the Holy Prophet's wives and used to give away most of her annual stipend to the poor. Before his death the Holy Prophet once remarked to his wives:

> "The first to join me among you is the one with the longest hand."

The Prophet's wives took the hint literally and started comparing the lengths of their hands. It was after the death of Zaynab that the other wives realized that the Holy Prophet's words actually alluded to the person's generosity. Zaynab died in 20 A.H., at the age of fifty-three.

9. UMM HABIBAH (Marriage : 628 A.D.)

Her real name was Ramlah and she was the daughter of Abu Sufyan, a staunch enemy of the Holy Prophet. She had married Ubaydullah bin Jahsh and both had embraced Islam in the early days of the Prophet's mission. To avoid the persecution of the Muslims in Mecca, both Umm Habibah and her husband went to Abyssinia with the Second Emigration of the Muslims to that country.

On reaching Abyssinia, her husband converted to Christianity while Umm Habibah remained steadfast in her faith. After his conversion, Ubaydullah separated from his wife and later on died.

In the seventh year of the Hijrah, the Holy Prophet sent his envoy from Medinah to Negus, King of Abyssinia, asking for Umm Habibah's hand in marriage. Negus conveyed the Prophet's proposal to Umm Habibah to which she readily consented. Negus himself presided over the marriage ceremony and afterwards sent Umm Habibah to Medinah under proper escort. At the time of her marriage to the Holy Prophet, Umm Habibah was about thirty-six years of age.

Umm Habibah died in 44 A.H. at the age of seventy-three and was buried in the *Jannat-ul Baqi* in Medinah.

10. SAFIYAH (Marriage : 628 A.D.)

Her real name was Zaynab and she was the daughter of Haiy bin Akhtab, a chieftain of the Banu Nadir tribe of the Jews. The Banu Nadir had been expelled from Medinah after the Battle of Uhud and had settled down at Khyber.

Safiyah's first marriage to Sallam bin Mishkan ended in divorce. She then married Kinanah, a Jewish warrior at Khyber. During the Battle of Khyber her husband and father were both killed and Safiyah, along with other women, was captured. In deference to her status among her own people, the Holy Prophet released her and invited her to embrace Islam. The Holy Prophet then asked for her hand in marriage, to which she readily agreed. She was about eighteen years old at the time.

Being of Jewish origin and an outsider, Safiyah often received a discriminatory treatment from the Holy Prophet's other wives. Once A'isha called her a "shrimp" on account of her short stature. The Holy Prophet overheard the remark and said to A'isha:

> "A'isha, you have said a word which, if dropped in the sea, would pollute the whole water."

On another occasion A'isha and Zaynab teased Safiyah regarding their ethnic superiority by saying that they were not only the Prophet's

wives but were also related to him. When Safiyah complained about this to the Holy Prophet, he said:

> "Safiyah, why didn't you reply saying that your father was Aaron, your uncle Moses and your husband is Muhammad; so how can they be superior to you?"

Safiyah died in 50 A.H., at the age of sixty-one and was buried in the *Jannat-ul Baqi.*

11. MAYMUNAH (Marriage : 629 A.D.)

Maymunah was the daughter of Harith of the Hawazin tribe and a sister-in-law of the Prophet's uncle, Abbas. She first married Masood bin Amr who divorced her. She then married Abu Rahm who died soon after.

On the suggestion of Abbas, the Holy Prophet married Maymunah, after the three-day pilgrimage in the seventh year of the Hijrah. The Holy Prophet wanted to have the marriage ceremony in Mecca and invite the Quraysh, but the Meccans did not allow him to stay in the city more than the three days agreed upon in the Treaty of Hudaybiya. The marriage ceremony, therefore, took place at Sarif, north of Mecca, and was performed by Abbas. Maymunah was about thirty years old at the time.

Maymunah died in 50 A.H., at the age of seventy-three and was buried at Sarif, according to her will. Besides Khadijah, Maymunah is the only wife of the Holy Prophet who was not buried in the Jannat-ul Baqi in Medinah.

12. MARIAH QIBTIAH (Marriage: 629 A.D.)

After the Treaty of Hudaybiya, the Holy Prophet sent his envoys to various kings and rulers inviting them to embrace Islam. One of the recipients of these envoys was Muqauqis, the Ruler of Egypt. Muqauqis did not embrace Islam but, very diplomatically, sent some presents to the Holy Prophet including two Coptic maidens named Mariah and Sirin.

Both these girls embraced Islam. Mariah was taken into marriage by the Holy Prophet while Sirin, her sister, was married to a Companion

of the Prophet. The marriage of Mariah took place in the seventh or eighth year of the Hijrah.

Mariah held the distinction of being the only wife, other than Khadijah, to bear the Holy Prophet a child, a son by the name of Ibrahim. This son, however, died in the tenth year of the Hijrah when he was only eighteen months old.

Mariah herself did not live long and died five years later. She was buried in the *Jannat-ul Baqi* graveyard.

A LIST OF THE MAJOR BATTLES AND EXPEDITIONS IN WHICH THE HOLY PROPHET TOOK PART

Battle	Muslim Forces	Date, AD	Date, A.H.
Battle of Badr	313	Jan. 624	Ramadhan 2
Battle of Uhud	700	Jan. 625	Shawwal 3
Campaign of Badr		Oct. 625	Rajab 4
Campaign of Dhatar-Reqa	400	Apr. 625	Muharram 5
Campn. of Dawmatul Jandal	1000	Jul. 626	Rabiul-Aw 5
Expedition of Banu Musta'liq		Dec. 626	Shaaban 5
Battle of the Ditch	3000	Feb. 627	Dhul-Qada 5
Campaign of Banu Lihyan		Aug. 627	Jamadi-I 6
Treaty of Hudaybiya	1500	Mar. 628	Dhul-Hijja 6
Battle of Khyber	1600	Mar. 628	Muharram 7
Battle of Mutah *	3000	Sep. 629	Jamadi-I 8
Conquest of Mecca	10,000	Jan. 630	Ramadhan 9
Battle of Hunayn	12,000	Jan. 630	Shawwal 9
Siege of Ta'if		Jan. 630	Shawwal 9
Campaign of Tabuk	30,000	Oct. 630	Rajab 9

* The Holy Prophet did not participate in this battle.

Note: No fighting took place during the Campaigns

A NOTE ON THE BATTLES FOUGHT DURING THE PROPHET'S LIFE

Much criticism is raised against Islam today, attributing its rapid spread to the use of sword and physical compulsion. This however, is not borne out by historical facts.

For the first fourteen years of his twenty-two year prophetic career, the Holy Prophet passively bore all sorts of persecutions and aggressions afflicted upon him. And when finally the permission to fight was granted by God (22:39) the Holy Prophet fought only in self defense or to check the enemy's war preparations or to establish peace in the area.

It should be noted that during the eight-year period from the Battle of Badr to the Campaign of tabuk, the total number of battle casualties in the whole of Arabia was only about 1250. Of these about 250 were Muslims and about 1000 non-Muslims. These are extremely small numbers even by the standards of those days, and put the degree of warfare carried out by the Muslims in its proper perspective.

SECTION 4

SUCCESSORS OF THE HOLY PROPHET

THE SYSTEM OF KHILAFAT IN ISLAM

At the death of the Holy Prophet, the Muslims lost not only their prophet but also their spiritual, religious and political leader. The Holy Prophet had not designated any successor during his own lifetime and the young Muslim community could not possibly survive without one. Someone had to lead the community and provide spiritual, social, legal and political direction. A leader, therefore, had to be selected who would not only be acceptable to the people but also worthy of the Prophet's ideals and objectives. The choice of the Muslims fell on Abu Bakr who was then elected as the first ***Khalifah*** or Successor of the Holy Prophet. This election or nomination of leaders in the Mulsim community grew into an institution called the ***Khilafat*** or Caliphate.

Like many other Islamic institutions, the system of Khilafat changed and evolved over a period of time. Not all Khalifahs were elected in exactly the same manner, nor were the political conditions identical at the demise of each Khalifah that would merit the adoption of one fixed system of election. Similarly, not all Khalifahs were alike in their piety, statesmanship, courage, foresight and charisma.

As long as the Holy Prophet was alive, he kept in check the tribal rivalries that existed among the Arabs. After his death, these rivalries came out in the open and played a significant role in manipulating the power vested in the office of the Khilafat.

The system of Khilafat, in one form or another, lasted some 626 years after the death of the Holy Prophet. During this period five distinct Caliphates existed among the Muslims, all belonging to the House of Quraysh. These were:

1. The Pious Caliphate	632- 661 AD
2. The Umayyad Caliphate of Damascus	661- 750 AD
3. The Abbasid Caliphate of Baghdad	750-1258 AD
4. The Umayyad Caliphate of Spain	929-1031 AD
5. The Fatimid Caliphate of Egypt	909-1171 AD

In the following pages we will briefly describe the main outlines of

THE CALIPHATES AFTER PROPHET MUHAMMAD

Name of Khalifah	Dates, AD	yrs.
The Pious Caliphs Of Medinah (632-661 AD)		
1. Abu Bakr	632 - 634	2
2. Umar	634 - 644	10
3. Uthman	644 - 656	12
4. Ali	656 - 661	5
The Umayyad Caliphs Of Damascus (661-750 AD)		
1. Muawiah	661 - 680	19
2. Yazid-I	680 - 683	3
3. Muawiah-II	683 - 683	1
4. Marwan	683 - 685	2
5. Abdul Malik	685 - 705	20
6. Walid-I	705 - 715	10
7. Sulayman	715 - 717	2
8. Umar-II (bin Abdul Aziz)	717 - 720	3
9. Yazid-II	720 - 724	4
10. Hisham	724 - 743	19
11. Walid-II	743 - 744	1
12. Yazid-III	744 - 744	1
13. Ibrahim	744 - 744	1
14. Marwan-II	744 - 750	6
The Umayyad Caliphs of Spain (929-1031 AD)		
1. Abdur Rahman III	929 - 961	32
2. Hakam II	961 - 976	15
3. Hisham II	976 - 1009 1010 - 1013	33
4. Muhammad II	1009 - 1010	1
5. Sulayman	1009 - 1010 1013 - 1016	4
6. Abdur Rahman IV	1018 -	
7. Abdur Rahman V	1023 -	
8. Muhammad III	1023 - 1025	2
9. Hisham III	1027 - 1031	4

The Abbasid Caliphs of Baghdad (750-1258 AD)

1.	Abul Abbas as-Safah	750 - 754	4
2.	Abu Jafar al-Mansur	754 - 775	21
3.	Al-Mahdi	775 - 785	10
4.	Al-Hadi	785 - 786	1
5.	Harun al-Rashid	786 - 809	23
6.	Al-Amin	809 - 813	4
7.	Al-Mamun	813 - 833	20
8.	Al-Mu'tasim	833 - 842	9
9.	Wathiq	842 - 847	5
10.	Al-Mutawakkil	847 - 861	14
11.	Muntasir	861 - 862	1
12.	Musta'in	862 - 866	4
13.	Al-Mu'tazz	866 - 869	3
14.	Al-Muhtadi	869 - 870	1
15.	Mu'tamid	870 - 892	22
16.	Mu'tazid	892 - 902	10
17.	Al-Muktafi	902 - 908	6
18.	Al-Muqtadir	908 - 932	24
19.	Al-Qahir	932 - 934	2
20.	Al-Razi	934 - 940	6
21.	Al-Muttaqi	940 - 944	4
22.	Al-Mustakfi	944 - 946	2
23.	Al-Muti	946 - 974	28
24.	Al-Tai	974 - 991	17
25.	Al-Qadir	991 - 1031	40
26.	Al-Qaim	1031 - 1075	44
27.	Al-Muqtadi	1075 - 1094	19
28.	Al-Mustazhir	1094 - 1118	24
29.	Al-Mustarshid	1118 - 1135	17
30.	Al-Rashid	1135 - 1136	1
31.	Al-Muqtafi	1136 - 1160	24
32.	Al-Mustanjid	1160 - 1170	10
33.	Al-Mustadi	1170 - 1180	10
34.	Al-Nasir	1180 - 1225	45
35.	Al-Zahir	1225 - 1226	1
36.	Al-Mustansir	1226 - 1242	16
37.	Al-Musta'sim	1242 - 1258	16

the various caliphates, their ascension to office and their ultimate decline.

Around 945 AD, during the period of Al-Mustakfi, the Abbasid Caliphate became very weak and various other groups controlled the real power. The names of some of these dynasties are given below:

Buwaihids	945 - 1055 AD
Saljuqs	1037 - 1157 AD
Crusades fought against the Christians	1096 - 1244 AD

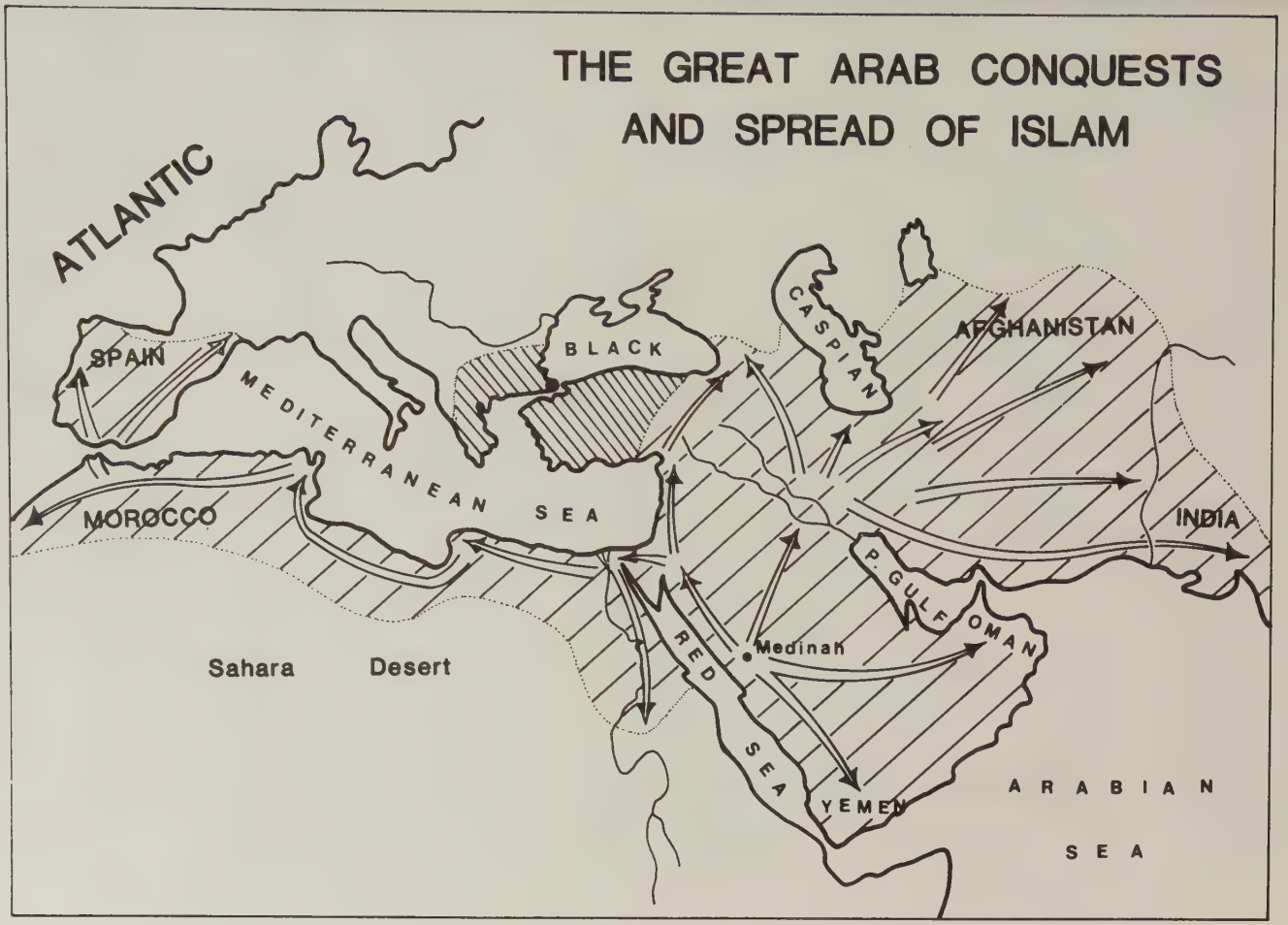
The Fatimid Caliphs of Egypt (909-1171 AD)

1. Ubaydullah Al-Mahdi	909 - 934	25
2. Al-Qa'im	934 - 946	12
3. Al-Mansur	946 - 962	16
4. Al-Muizz	962 - 975	13
5. Al-Aziz	975 - 996	21
6. Al-Hakim	996 - 1021	25
7. Al-Zahir	1021 - 1036	15
8. Al-Mustansir	1036 - 1095	59
9. Al-Musta'li	1095 - 1101	7
10. Al-Amir	1101 - 1130	29
11. Al-Hafiz	1130 - 1149	19
12. Al-Zafir	1149 - 1154	5
13. Al-Faiz	1154 - 1160	6
14. Al-Azid	1160 - 1171	11

The fourteenth and last of the Fatimid Caliphs was dethroned in 1171 A.D. by Salahuddin the Great, the famous warrior of the Crusades. With the fall of Al-Azid ended the Fatimid dynasty which was founded by Al-Mahdi some 262 years ago.

THE PIOUS CALIPHATE OF MEDINAH (632-661 AD)

1.	Abu Bakr	632 - 634 A.D.	2 years
2.	Umar	634 - 644 A.D.	10 years
3.	Uthman	644 - 656 A.D.	12 years
4.	Ali	656 - 661 A.D.	5 years


THE GREAT ARAB CONQUESTS
AND SPREAD OF ISLAM
ATLANTIC
SPAIN
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
BLACK
CASPIAN
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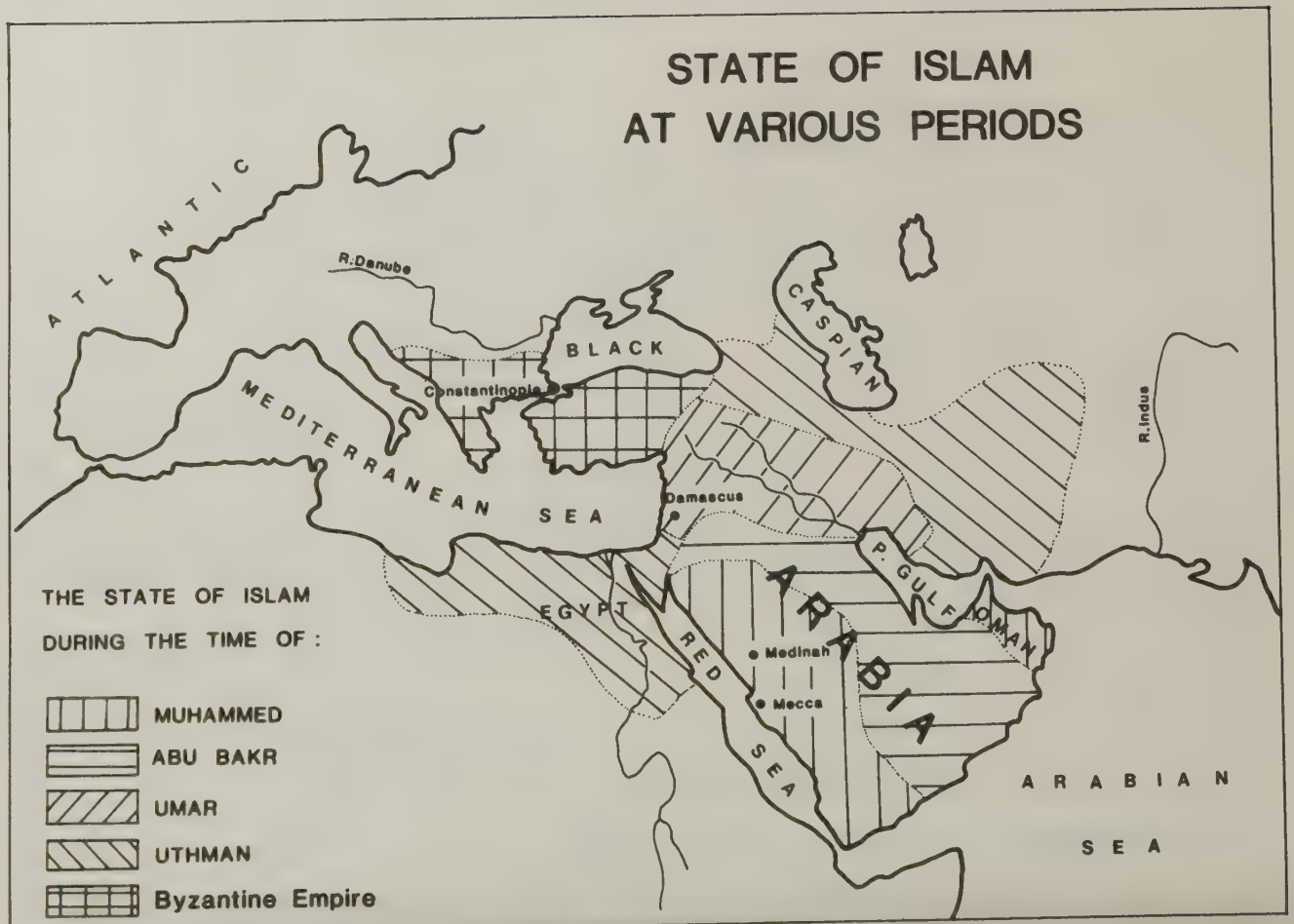
INDIA
P. GULF
OMAN
Sahara Desert
Medinah
RED SEA
YEMEN
ARABIAN SEA


STATE OF ISLAM
AT VARIOUS PERIODS
ATLANTIC
R.Danube
BLACK
CASPIAN
Constantinople
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Damascus
R.Indus
P. GULF OMAN
EGYPT
RED SEA
ARABIA
Medinah
Mecca
ARABIAN SEA
THE STATE OF ISLAM
DURING THE TIME OF :
MUHAMMED
ABU BAKR
UMAR
UTHMAN
Byzantine Empire

After the death of the Holy Prophet, the period of the four successors, Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali, is known as the Pious Caliphate. This was the most critical period for the State of Islam. The transition from the absolute authority of the Messenger of God to the authority of an elected successor was not easy for the Muslims.

The Pious Caliphate, which lasted 29 years, was notable for the remarkable expansion of the Islamic State and the democratic election of the Khalifahs. However, this Caliphate was also riddled with internal dissension, apostasy and factional strife.

The most significant feature of the Pious Caliphate was its system of election. All the four Khalifahs were elected in one way or another. In the case of other dynastic Caliphates that followed, this system of election was replaced in favour of direct nomination of family members.

The Khalifahs in the Pious Caliphate were the heads of State with no constitutional or political check on their authority. But this did not mean that they could do whatever they wanted. The Khalifahs had to excercise their authority according to the commands and principles of the Quran and the Hadith. In the later Caliphates, as we will see, this restraint on the Khalifahs was removed and they literally did whatever they pleased.

Another notable feature of the Pious Caliphate was the Shura or the Consultative Body which advised the Khalifah on all important matters. During the later Caliphates, this Shura was dissolved and the decision making rested solely with the Khalifah himself.

During the period of the Pious Caliphate, a Public Treasury was set up to receive zakat and other taxes and to meet the expenditures of general administration, warfare and social programs. In the later Caliphates, this Public Treasury became the personal property of the Khalifahs.

The other notable aspect of the Pious Caliphate was the extreme simplicity with which the Khalifahs led their lives. They lived in ordinary homes, did their own household work, had no bodyguards, and their doors were always open to any complainant. On the other hand, the Khalifahs in the later Caliphates lived like kings in their lofty castles, enjoying the worldly pleasures and were inaccessible to the

common public.

It was indeed a great blessing for Islam that the immediate Successors of the Holy Prophet were men of great wisdom, courage and saintly character. Although they were heads of the Islamic State, supreme commanders of the Muslim armies and chief justices of the judicial system, yet they led a life completely free from any pomp and show. Many a times visitors from distant areas would come to the Khalifah's court and ask the question, "Where is the Khalifah?", while all the time the Khalifah sat in front of them dressed in ordinary clothes, indistinguishable from the common people.

To the Pious Khalifahs their office was a sacred trust and a responisbility to be discharged with great honesty, diligence and perseverance. They paid no heed to the honour and prestige vested in their office and devoted their lives whole-heartedly to the betterment of their subjects and to spreading the message of Islam.

Now we will read brief accounts of the first four Khalifahs who succeeded the Holy Prophet and made up the Pious Caliphate.

ABU BAKR (632 - 634 A.D.)

Abu Bakr was nearly the same age as the Holy Prophet, being only two and a half years younger than him. His real name was Abdullah but he was commonly known by his ***kuniyat,*** Abu Bakr. He belonged to the tribe of Quraysh and his genealogy unites his forefathers with that of the Prophet's.

The sudden death of the Holy Prophet in 632 A.D., threw the Muslim world in complete confusion. The Muslims in Medinah became divided into two camps: the *Ansar* and the *Muhajiroon.* Each group was trying to promote its own people for the position of the successor.

Abu Bakr addressed the Ansar and told them that as far as service to Islam was concerned, no one could rival the Ansar. But the people of Arabia, he said, would not acknowledge a leader from other than the Quraysh.

At this the Ansar suggested that there be a chief from the Quraysh and a chief from among themselves. Umar, however, strongly

disagreed with this proposal saying that two chiefs could not stand together. Abu Bakr suggested that the people select their leader from either Umar or Abu Ubaydah, both of whom were present there. But both of them declined, saying that they could not possibly give preference to themselves over Abu Bakr.

When the situation started to get tense, Umar took hold of Abu Bakr's hand and swore allegience to him. This seemed to settle the matter. After this Abu Ubaydah and all others present, came forward and swore allegience to Abu Bakr. Abu Bakr then rose and addressed the Muslims:

> "I am not the best among you; I need all your advice and all your help... In my sight the powerful and the weak are alike and I wish to render justice to both. Obey me if I obey God and His Prophet; if I neglect the laws of God and the Prophet, I have no more right to your obedience. If I do well, support me; if I make a mistake, counsel me."

On becoming Khalifah, Abu Bakr faced a number of problems, three of which are noteworthy:

(i) The appearance of false prophets
(ii) The apostasy movement among the various tribes
(iii) Refusal by many Muslims to pay the Zakat

The success of the Holy Prophet's mission gave ideas to many ambitious persons in different parts of Arabia to lay similar claims to prophethood. Aswad Ansi was the first to rise in Yemen. He was followed by Musaylmah in central Arabia and Tulayha in northern Arabia. Even a woman, by the name of Sajah, claimed to be a prophetess. She married Musaylmah and joined forces with him. Abu Bakr dispatched forces to fight these pretenders and seekers of political power. Of the four, Aswad Ansi and Musaylmah were defeated and killed while Tulayha and Sajah ultimately embraced Islam.

Musaylmah, who was known among the Muslims as Musaylmah the Liar, died at the hands of Wahshi, the Abyssinian slave. Wahshi was also responsible for Hamzah's death in the battle of Uhud but had embraced Islam since the Conquest of Mecca. In his later life Wahshi

used to tell the people how he had killed both, the best of men and the worst of men.

The apostasy movement, in which various Arab tribes were renouncing Islam, was very serious. The motives of this movement were purely political in which the tribal chiefs were in fact renouncing their allegience to the Successor of the Holy Prophet. Abu Bakr also sent troops to deal with the apostates and suppress this rebellion.

The third problem facing the new Khalifah was the refusal by many people to pay the zakat or the obligatory alms. When the zakat was first introduced during the life of the Holy Prophet, many people paid it only in deference to the Prophet's wishes. Soon after he died, these people refused to pay it any more. Zakat had become an essential Islamic institution and fulfilled the needs of the State and the poor. Abu Bakr, therefore, came down hard on those who did not pay it. He vowed to collect zakat from every one who was paying it during the Holy Prophet's time.

After attending to the above three problems, Abu Bakr turned his attention to areas outside Arabia. Under the command of Khalid bin Walid, the Muslim army first quashed the rebellion in Bahrain which had started after the death of Mundhir, the ruler of that area. Then, the Muslim forces fought a battle against the Persians who had been helping the rebels of Bahrain. After this, Khalid bin Walid advanced to the Syrian frontier. There, after defeating the Roman armies in the battles of Ajnadan and Yarmuk, the Muslim forces took the whole of Syria under their control.

Little over two years after becoming the Khalifah, Abu Bakr fell ill and after a fortnight's illness, passed away on August 23, 634 A.D. Abu Bakr took the office of Khilafat at the most crucial time in Islamic history when the rising of false prophets, rebellion, disunity among the Muslims, and political developments outside Arabia, all threatened the new born state of Islam. He crushed the influence of the false prophets, brought unity among the Muslims and put an end to rebellions at home and abroad.

Abu Bakr was an extremely gentle and pious person. He was one of the first few people to embrace Islam and was a constant companion

of the Holy Prophet. It was Abu Bakr who accompanied the Prophet during his escape from Mecca and gave his daughter, A'isha, in marriage to him after the death of his first wife, Khadijah. Abu Bakr, therefore, was always held in high esteem by the Holy Prophet who appointed him to lead the Prayers during his last illness. Abu Bakr was a wealthy man and always gave generously in the cause of Islam.

UMAR BIN KHATTAB (634 - 644 A.D.)

Just before Abu Bakr passed away, he consulted some prominent Muslims regarding a suitable successor. Everyone suggested Umar's name, who was then nominated to be the next Khalifah.

As soon as Umar took the office of Khilafat, he continued with the expansion of the Islamic state initiated by his predecessor. During the period 633-642 A.D., the Muslims fought a number of battles against the Persians. Some of these battles were:

Battle of the Chains	fought during Abu Bakr's time
Battle of Namaraq	
Battle of Jasr	
Battle of Buwaib	fought during Umar's time
Battle of Qadisiya	
Battle of Jalula	
Battle of Nihawand	

In the last battle of Nihawand, the Persians were finally defeated and large parts of Iran came under the Muslim rule.

On the Syrian front, Muslims had already defeated the Romans in the battle of Yarmuk, fought during the time of Abu Bakr. After the fall of Yarmuk, the Muslims laid siege to the city of Jerusalem. A treaty was eventually negotiated between the Muslims and the people of Jerusalem according to which:

- the inhabitants' life, property and churches were given protection
- Islam was not to be forced on them
- the inhabitants were to pay the "jizya" or poll-tax
- the Greeks were to be turned out of the City

In the year 639 A.D., Amr bin A's was sent towards Egypt. After a siege of seven months of the fort of Fustat and a heavily fought battle at Alexandria, the whole of Egypt came under the Muslim rule.

Umar not only conquered a vast area during his ten year Khilafat, but also implemented a great system of administration. Umar governed the state of Islam on the principle of democracy. Some of his administrative achievements are given below:

- He formed a Consultative Body of advisors called the Shura, and sought its advice and help in all important matters
- For the sake of convenience of administration, he divided the empire into provinces and appointed a governor for each province
- He strictly forbade the Arabs from holding or owning any land in the conquered territories
- He introduced a system of old age pension
- He introduced the Muslim era of Hijrah
- He established a department of finance
- He founded schools and mosques in different parts of the Islamic state

In the year 644 A.D., Umar was fatally stabbed by a Persian slave while he was saying his Prayer in the mosque. Umar bin Khattab was truly a great man. His brilliant conquests, personal bravery and able administrative qualities, helped greatly in putting the young Islamic state on the right footings. He was very simple, honest, impartial and fore-sighted. He was extremely strict in the following of Islamic principles, yet very kind and sympathetic at heart. He lived a very simple and unostentatious life.

Umar was always concerned about the proper discharging of his duties as the religious and political leader of the Muslims. He used to walk the streets of Medinah at night to make sure that the people were sleeping well and not in need of anything.

At-Tabari, the great Muslim historian, narrates a conversation Umar had with Salman which shows the genuine fear of God the great

Khalifah had in his heart. Umar once asked Salman:

"Am I a King or a Khalifah?"

To this Salman replied:

"If you have collected a tax of even one dirham from the people and applied it unlawfully, you are a King, not a Khalifah."

On hearing this Umar is reported to have wept.

UTHMAN BIN AFFAN (644 - 656 A.D.)

When Umar was on his death bed, he appointed a council to elect the next successor. The council consisted of:

Abdur Rahman bin Auf
Ali
Sa'd
Talha
Uthman, and
Zubayr

Abdur Rahman was not willing to shoulder the great responsibility and opted out of the election in favour of the other five. He was, therefore, appointed to seek a common consensus for the next Khalifah. Abdur Rahman took the opinions of the council members and other prominent Muslims and the majority votes were in favour of Uthman. He was, therefore, declared as the elected Khalifah and everyone took the oath of allegience at his hand.

During the Khilafat of Uthman, the borders of the state of Islam were extended further to the east, north and west. In the east, the Persian King Yazdigard, tried to instigate rebellion in the country against the authority of Islam. The rebellion was crushed and the whole of Iran came under Muslim rule.

In the north, the Muslim forces under Muawiah fought against the Roman armies once again with the result that Asia Minor also came under Muslim control.

In the west, the Muslims defeated the Roman forces sent to invade

Egypt by sea and annexed this large territory to the Muslim state.

During the first half of his Khilafat, Uthman ruled the state with good reputation and was well liked by the people. Then, a number of charges began to be laid against the Khalifah by the same people who once spoke very highly of him. Some of these charges were:

- that Uthman had appointed his relatives and kinsmen to important posts in the government
- that Uthman was extravagant and gave away large sums of money to his relations
- that Uthman burned copies of the Holy Quran

It is true that Uthman did appoint some relatives to high positions but, in each case, the person was deserving of the appointment. In some cases, he dismissed his appointed kinsmen when the public complained about it.

Similarly, Uthman's generosity towads his relatives was completely misunderstood by the public at large. Whatever Uthman gave, he gave from his personal property and not from the State Treasury. Before becoming the Khalifah, Uthman was one of the biggest owners of camels and goats and was known among his people as Uthman Ghani, meaning Uthman the Self Sufficient. But he gave away all these to his relatives, and towards the end of his Khilafat he had only two camels left and these, too, were meant for the pilgrimage.

The charge of burning the Holy Quran, also was not founded on facts. When Uthman standardized the Holy Quran, he had all the other un-authentic versions collected and burned for the sake of preserving only the authentic copies. This action of his was misunderstood by the people, who raised a great commotion that the sacred Book was burnt.

Although Uthman gave numerous explanations for his misunderstood conduct, the wave of dissent and revolt against him started to spread throughout the state. At the same time, the age old jealousy and rivalry between the Hashimites and the Umayyads started to resurface. An important reason for the rapidly deteriorating political situation was also the extreme simplicity and kindness of Uthman's

character. Uthman often dealt too kindly with the criminals and the rebels.

At last, the various parties who wanted to depose Uthman, joined forces and entered Medinah. Uthman refused to fight and shed the blood of fellow Muslims. The rebels surrounded his house and while he was reading the Quran, assassinated him on June 17, 656 A.D.

Uthman was a very pious, kind, gentle, honest, and dutiful person. He was famous for his generosity and lived a very simple life. He was thought of very highly by the Holy Prophet who had given two of his daughters in marriage to him. He had great love for his fellow Muslims and eventually sacrificed his own life rather than shed their blood.

ALI BIN ABU TALIB (656 - 661 AD)

With the death of Uthman, a state of complete disorder and anarchy ruled in the city of Medinah. After five days of political wrangling, Ibn Saba, leader of the Egyptian rebel group supported the cause of Ali on the grounds that he was the rightful Khalifah in whose favour the Holy Prophet had made a will. On June 23, 656 A.D., six days after the death of Uthman, Ali was chosen as the fourth successor of the Holy Prophet and the public swore allegience at his hand one by one.

Soon after his election, Ali moved the capital of the Muslim State from Medinah to Kufah in al-Iraq, which was a more central place. After leaving Medinah in 656 A.D., Ali never had the opportunity to visit that place again in his life.

Immediately after the election of Ali, a cry of revenge arose throughout Arabia for the blood of the murdered Khalifah. Talha and Zubayr were among those who requested Ali to punish the murderers of Uthman. But the assassination of Uthman was not the work of a few lonely individuals. A number of important tribal chiefs were involved in the conspiracy. Realizing the political sensitivity of the Islamic state, Ali did not consider it proper to take any immediate action. He told the public that justice would be carried out in due course.

To further pacify the rebels, Ali took steps to change all the provincial governors and asked them to step down. All except Muawiah

complied. Muawiah, from the House of Umayyah, had been appointed governor of Syria by Umar himself. He was a very ambitious man and had accumulated great power in a short time. The refusal by Muawiah to obey the Khalifah's orders set the stage for an eventual armed conflict between the two.

In the beginning, Talha and Zubayr demanded from Ali that assassins of Uthman be brought to justice. But when Ali did not comply with their demand, they advanced towards Basrah to raise an army. On the way they met A'isha, the wife of the Holy Propeht, who was returning from the pilgrimage. She was shocked to learn of the murder of the pious Khalifah and decided to join Talha and Zubayr in an effort to punish the assassins. The three marched towards Basrah at the head of a small army. There, in December 656 A.D., a battle was fought with the forces of Ali which is known as the Battle of Jamal. In this battle, Talha and Zubayr were both killed and the army, then under the command of A'isha, was defeated. Ali treated A'isha with due honour and sent her back to Medinah in the escort of her brother, Muhammad bin Abu Bakr.

Next year, in 657 A.D., Ali once again wrote to Muawiah to submit to him in the interest of Islam. Muawiah again refused to submit untill the blood of Uthman, who was also from the House of Umayyah, was avenged. At this open disobedience, Ali could find no other recourse but to declare war against Muawiah.

With an army of fifty thousand men, Ali marched towards Syria. Muawiah also raised a large army in Syria and advanced to meet Ali. In July 657 A.D., the two armies met at a place called Siffin. The battle was fought only for a day or so but both sides suffered heavy casualties. Finally, it was decided that each side will appoint a representative and these two persons will be given full powers to make a judgment in the dispute.

The Two persons thus selected for arbitration were Abu Musa Ash'ari, representing Ali's group and Amr bin A's, representing Muawiah's party. These two persons met at a place called Dumatul-Jandal, located between Tabuk and Kufa. Their decision was that both Ali and Muawiah should give up their claims to Khilafat and that a third person should be elected as Khalifah.

There were people in Ali's group who were basically against arbitration and were not prepared to accept such a decision. Some 12,000 of these men separated from Ali's group and caused great disorder and havoc in the empire. They were known by the title of "Kharijites" meaning Outsiders. Their movement grew with time, causing great hardship to not only Ali but also to the later Khalifahs of the House of Umayyah.

After the fateful decision by Abu Musa Ash'ari and Amr bin A's, rebellions broke out all over the land and the political stability of the Islamic state started to deteriorate very rapidly. Finding the situation very serious, Ali agreed to negotiate a treaty with Muawiah, in the interest of Islam. Under this agreement, Muawiah retained control of Syria and Egypt while the rest of the empire remained under Ali's rule.

The Kharijites were not happy with this peaceful development and decided to kill Ali in Kufa, Muawiah in Damascus and Amr bin A's in Fustat, all in the course of one night, the 27th of January 661 A.D. That night, Amr bin A's escaped death and someone else who was leading the Prayer, fell victim to the assassin's sword. In Damascus, Muawiah escaped with relatively minor injuries from which he soon recovered. In Kufa, Ali was attacked while he was going to the mosque to say his morning Prayer, and was mortally wounded. Two days later, he passsed away.

Ali was not only the Holy Prophet's cousin and son-in-law, but was also the second person to believe in him at the young age of thirteen. Ali was brave, courageous and a model of simplicity. He never had any servant or maid in the house and he and his wife, Fatimah, did all the house work themselves. He led a pure and unselfish life. When the responsibility of Khilafat fell on his shoulders, he fulfilled it in the best interest of Islam.

ACCESSION OF HASAN

On the death of Ali, his eldest son Hasan was elected as the Khalifah. As soon as Muawiah learned of this, he invaded Iraq and a battle ensued between Muawiah's and Hasan's armies. Hasan realized the seriousness of the situation and sent a letter of submission to

Muawiah. Hasan agreed to abdicate his right to Khilafat in favour of Muawiah on the condition that after Muawiah's death, Hasan's younger brother Husain will be made the Khalifah. After this agreement, Hasan retired with his family to Medinah, where he was poisoned to death at the instigation of Yazid, the son of Muawiah.

The Umayyad Caliphate of Damascus (661-750 AD)

At the end of the Pious Caliphate and the abdication by Hasan, Muawiah proclaimed himself the new Khalifah and moved the capital from Kufa to Damascus. From that day on till the fall of the Umayyad Caliphate 89 years later, all Khalifahs came from the House of Umayyah. In each case the reigning Khalifah nominated his successor from his own family. Thus the system of Khilafat that started with Abu Bakr as a democratic institution became, under the Umayyads, a dynasty and a monarchy.

The Umayyads also took over the Public Treasury and made it into a family possession. Similarly, the Shura or the Consultative Body set up under the Pious Caliphate disappeared and free criticism of the state policy was no longer tolerated. While the Pious Khalifahs used to live a very simple life, the Umayyad Khalifahs lived in castles and palaces. The practice of drinking and gambling was re-introduced in the society and a new era of worldly pleasures and comforts dawned on the empire of Islam.

During the reign of the Umayyad Caliphate, the borders of the Islamic State were further extended in all directions and the Muslim world produced some of its best generals during this period. Uqba conquered North Africa and founded the famous city of Kairouan; Qutaybia crossed the Oxus River and brought Transoxiana under Muslim rule; Muhammad bin Qasim took the flag of Islam into Sind, a province of India; while Tariq bin Ziyad and Musa bin Nusair marched into Spain, annexing this area to the Islamic State.

With the enlargement of the empire, Umayyads introduced a number of reforms and made numerous innovations and improvements to the administrative system.

There were 14 Khalifahs in all in the Umayyad dynasty. Some of

these only reigned for a year or so. The notable Umayyad Khalifahs include Muawiah, Abdul Malik, Walid-I, Umar bin Abdul Aziz and Hisham. Umar bin Abdul Aziz is also considered by many Muslims to be the Mujaddid or Reformer of the first century of Islam.

With the rising power of the House of Abbas, the Umayyad Caliphate came to a close in the year 750 A.D. Some members of the House of Umayyah went to Spain and there they founded first an Emirate and later on the Caliphate. We will read more about this in the section on the Umayyad Caliphate of Spain and now we move on to the Abbasid Caliphate.

The Abbasid Caliphate of Baghdad (750-1258 AD)

Towards the end of the Umayyad Caliphate, the people started raising charges of worldliness and neglect of Islamic principles against the Khalifahs. Also, people started showing sympathy and devotion to the Hashimites, the clan of the Holy Prophet. Meantime, the descendants of Abbas, an uncle of the Prophet, started pressing claims to Khilafat. They united with the descendants of Ali to emphasize the rights of the House of Hashim. Finally, a coalition was formed by the Abbasids, the Shiites and the Khurasanians, which opposed the existing Khilafat of the Umayyads and promised a return to orthodox religion and the forming of a religious government.

With the murder of Marwan-II, the last of the Umayyad Khalifahs, Abdul Abbas was proclaimed the new Khalifah and the system of Caliphate passed from the House of Umayyah to the House of Abbas. The first act of the new Abbasid Khalifah was to undertake wholesale killing of the members of the Umayyad clan. He also moved the capital of the empire from Damascus to Baghdad.

The authority of the new Abbasid Khalifah, however, was not recognized throughout the Islamic empire. Spain and large parts of Africa remained outside the Abbasid rule and in the eastern part of the empire, independent dynasties arose.

The Abbasid Caliphate lasted over five hundred years. Some notable figures in this period were: Al-Mansur, Harun al-Rashid and al-Mamun. Around the year 946 A.D., the Buwaihids came to power

and dominated the Khilafat for the next hundred years. From this time on, the Abbasid Khalifahs were only figureheads and the real power was wielded first by the Buwaihids and later on by the Saljuqs. It was during the period of the Saljuqs that the Crusades were fought against the Christian empires of Europe.

Throughout the Crusades, the Khalifahs of Baghdad remained engrossed in their internal struggles and passed their days idly and extravagantly. This mode of life continued till the capture of Baghdad by Halaku Khan, the grandson of Genghis Khan. Halaku Khan devastated the city of Baghdad and killed al-Musta'sim, the last Khalifah of the Abbasid Dynasty, in 1258 A.D.

When the Abbasid Caliphate replaced the Umayyad dynasty, the period of conquests came to a close and the empire of Islam entered a period of civilization. Fields of education, music, agricuture, architecture, painting, calligraphy, science and literature were patronized by the Abbasid Khalifahs and received their special attention. The Abbasid reign, therefore, produced some great Muslim scientists and philosophers, some of whom are mentioned below:

Ali al-Tabari	physician
al-Razi	physician
Ali ibn Abbas	physician
ibn Sina (Avicenna)	physician, philosopher, astronomer
al-Khawarizmi	astronomer, mathematician, geographer founder of Algebra, Arabic numerals and the negative sign
al-Asturlabi	astronomer and the inventor of astrolabe
al-Mahani	astronomer and a scholar of solid geometry and trignometry
al-Beruni	physical and mathematical scientist, philosopher, historian
Umar al-Khayam	mathematician, astronomer, poet
Nasiruddin Tusi	astronomer, mathematician
ibn Hayyan (Geber)	father of modern chemistry
al-Ghazali	philosopher

al-Kindi	philosopher
al-Farabi (Alpharabius)	philosopher
ibn al-Athir	historian
Firdausi	writer and poet
al-Battani	astronomer
al-Farghani	astronomer
al-Jahiz	zoologist
al-Damiri	zoologist

The Umayyad Caliphate of Spain (929-1031 AD)

When the first Abbasid Khalifah started the massacre of Umayyad dynasty, a member of the House of Umayyah, Abdur Rahman, escaped to Spain. There he established himself as a ruler and founded the Umayyad dynasty in Spain.

For 173 years (756-929 AD), the Umayyads ruled in Spain under the titles of *Amirs* and *Sultans.* Then, in the year 929 AD, Abdur Rahman-III assumed the titles of Khalifah and Amir al-Mu'mineen, and thus laid the foundation of the Umayyad Caliphate in Spain.

Over the next 102 years, there were nine Khalifahs in this dynasty but only the first three had long reigns. These were:

Abdur Rahman III
Hakam II, and
Hisham II

By the year 1031 AD, the Caliphate system ended in Spain and the country plunged into total anarchy. Out of this disorder emerged a number of small kingdoms. These petty kingdoms continued till Ferdinand conquered Cordova in 1236 AD and Seville in 1248 AD

The period of Umayyad Caliphate in Spain, or Andalus as the Arabs called it, was one of the most glorious in the history of Islam. Both, Abdur Rahman-III and his son Hakam-II, were great patrons of science and literature. Muslim Spain produced some great people in these fields, some of whom are listed below:

ibn Rushd (Averroes)	philosopher, astronomer
Mohyuddin ibn al-Arabi	a great Muslim mystic
ibn Khaldun	a great Muslim historian
Ali ibn Hazn	scholar, thinker, writer
ibn Abdul Rabbi	distinguished author
ibn Zaydun	poet
al-Baytar	botanist and pharmacist
al-Baqi	geographer
al-Idris	geographer
ibn Jubayr al-Masuni ibn Batuta	famous travellers
al-Majirite al-Zarqali ibn Aflah	astronomers
al-Zahrawi	physician
ibn Zuhr	physician
Solomon bin Gabirol ibn Bajjah ibn Tufayl	philosophers

Spanish women were not confined to house-work, either, and contributed much to the greatness of the Muslim civilization in Spain. Some of the well known names of Muslim women in Spain include:

Nazkun	Zaynab	Hamda
Hafsa	al-Kalzyha	Safia
Maria	A'isha	Hasana
Umm-ul Ula	al-Walladha	al-Aruziah
Marium	Asma	Umm-ul Hina
Itimad	Busina	

THE FATIMID CALIPHATE OF EGYPT(909-1171 AD)

The Fatimids claimed themselves to be the direct descendents of Ali and Fatimah. According to them, Ubaydullah al-Mahdi the founder of the Fatimid Caliphate, was the great-great grandson of

Ismail, the son of the sixth Imam Jafar al-Sadiq.

After the death of Imam Jafar al-Sadiq, a schism appeared among the Shiites. A majority recognized Musa al-Kazim as the 7th Imam and these Shias are known as the "Twelvers". The others recognized Muhammad al-Mahdi, son of Ismail, as the 7th Imam and these peopleare known as the Ismailis.

Ubaydullah used to be an Ismailite Imam in Syria and was invited to head the North African Ismailite movement. He accepted the invitation, declaring himself the great-great grandson of Ismail. In 909 AD, he reached Tunis, the capital of the Aghlabids and drove Ziadatullah, the last Aghlabid ruler, out of the country. After this he proclaimed himself Imam under the title of Ubaydullah al-Mahdi and thus established the Fatimid Caliphate in North Africa.

There were 14 Khalifahs in the Fatimid dynasty who ruled North Africa for about 262 years. The last of the Fatimid Khalifahs, al-Azid, was dethroned by Salahuddin the Great, the famous warrior of the Crusades.

The contribution of the Fatimids to the progress of science and literature was not as great as under the Abbasids or the Umayyads of Spain. Nevertheless, a number of the Fatimid Khalifahs patronized various fields of learning and the Khilafat produced its share of some well known Muslim scholars. Many schools and colleges were established by the Khalifahs. The famous al-Azhar academy was established by Khalifah al-Aziz.

Generally speaking, the period of the Fatimid Caliphate was a period of prosperity for the country. Most of the Fatimid Khalifahs were liberal, considerate to their subjects, great warriors and good administrators. The administration of the Fatimids was essentially patterned after the Abbasids. The Khalifah was the spiritual as well as the temporal head of the State.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SECTS IN ISLAM

Like other religions in the world, Islam has its share of religious discension and sects. At numerous times during the course of Islamic

history, political events and ideological and theological issues divided the Muslim community into various groups which then started to identify with specific causes. At present there are more than 72 sects in Islam.

Basically, there are two main divisions in Islam: the Sunnis and the Shias. All other sects developed from these two main streams. To give an idea of their relative proportions, about 85% of all "Muslims" living today belong to the Sunni stream of Islam while about 15% belong to the Shia stream. Some important sects of Islam and their relationship with the two main streams are shown below:

Sunni Stream of Islam:	Ahle Hadith (Traditionists)	
	Wahhabis	
	Ahmadis	
Shia Stream of Islam:	Zaydis	
	Twelvers	
	Seveners:	Nizaris or Ismailis
		Musta'lis or Bohras

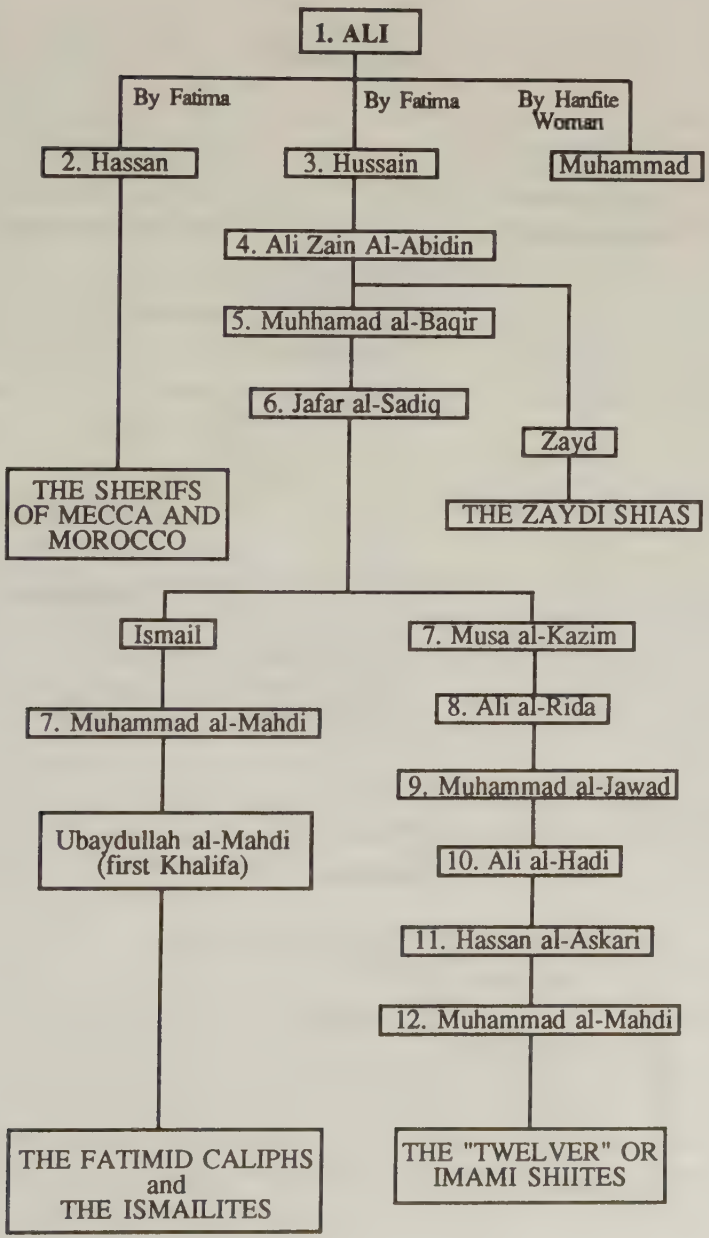
THE SUNNI MUSLIMS

As mentioned above, the main body of Muslims comprises the Sunnis who accept the authority and the bona fide status of the first four "Pious" Khalifahs and the comprehensive system of Islamic law, the Shari'a. There are four distinct orthodox law schools recognized by the Sunnis. These are: the Malikis, Hanafis, Shafis and Hanbalis. These schools are based on the interpretation of Islamic law by the four well known Islamic jurists and theologians of the first three centuries of Islam: Imam Malik bin Anas, Imam Abu Hanifa, Imam Muhammad bin Idris al-Shafi and Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal. Although the founders of the four schools of law differ significantly on many matters related to the regulations of worship and the law, there is a certain cohesion within the Sunni community which allows this variance to exist without destroying the fundamental unity of beliefs in this stream of Islam.

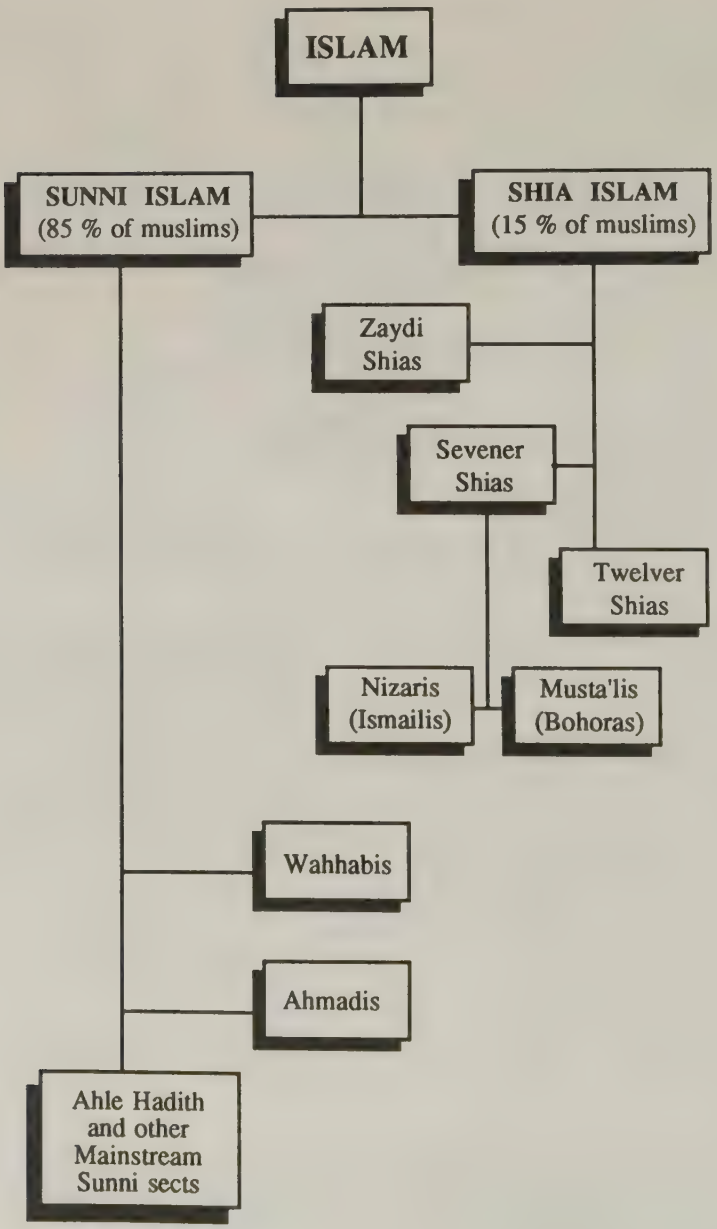
A majority of the Sunni Muslims belong to the Ahle Hadith or Traditionist sect. They give particular importance to the sayings and doings of the Holy Prophet, as recorded in the various books of

THE HOUSE OF ALI

The Various Imams of the Shiites and the Ismailis are indicated by number



THE DEVELOPMENT OF SECTS IN ISLAM



Hadith. Over the years, many sects developed which took issues from some of the main beliefs of the Traditionists. Of these sects we will discuss only two in this book: the Wahhabis and the Ahmadis.

The Wahhabis

The Wahhabi sect rose in the middle of the eighteenth century within the Arabian Peninsula. The Wahhabi movement was started by Muhammad bin Abdul-Wahhab (1703-1793 AD) who was a native of Najd, a province in north-central Arabia. He preached a strict puritanical Islam which forbade the veneration of holy places, religious relics and holy men. Amir Muhammad ibn Sa'ud of Dar'iyyah accepted Wahhabi beliefs and his descendents, the House of Sa'ud, did much to propagate and establish Wahhabi doctrines in Arabia and surrounding areas. During the spread of the political influence of the House of Sa'ud, numerous armed conflicts occurred with the Ottoman Empire of Turkey.

The Ahmadis

The Ahmadiyya movement was founded in 1889 as a sect of Islam by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, India. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad claimed to be the Mujaddid of the fourteenth century of Islam and the Promised Messiah and the Promised Mahdi whose advent had been foretold in the Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. The Ahmadis generally follow the Hanafi school of law.

We will read about the beliefs of Ahmadi Muslims and the history of this movement in some detail in Section-5.

THE SHIA MUSLIMS

The Shia stream of Islam traces its origin in political developments dating back to the period of Uthman, the third successor of the Holy Prophet. At the death of Umar, the second Khalifah, a council of six persons was entrusted with the task of electing the new Khalifah. The backers and supporters of Ali, commonly referred to as the partisans of Ali, showed visible disappointment at the outcome and called the

election a "conspiracy" to withhold the Khilafat from the Prophet's own family. This was the first seed of discension which appeared in Islam and eventually divided the otherwise united community.

During the reign of the Umayyad Khalifahs, the supporters of the House of Ali led many unsuccessful religious revolts. They never recognized the authority of the Umayyad Khalifahs and followed their own Imams who were the direct descendents of Ali. The Shias eventually split into many sects, four of which are noteworthy.

The Zaydis

Zayd was the son of Ali Zayn al-Abidin, the grandson of Husain and the great-grandson of Ali bin Abu Talib. Zayd was killed in an armed conflict against the Umayyad Khalifah, Hisham. Since his death, his supporters and followers broke away from the mainstream of Shias and became a distinct sect by themselves. Of all the Shias, Zaydis are the closest to Sunnis in their beliefs. Today the Zaydi Shias are mostly found in Yemen.

The Twelver Shias or Asna-ashariya

These comprise the largest group of the Shias today and exhibit most of the classical Shia doctrines. The Twelver Shias are known by this name because they follow the twelve Imams, all belonging to the House of Ali. Their twelvth Imam, Muhammad al-Mahdi, is believed by them to be still alive and in hiding. The Shias believe in the messianic return of this Imam in the latter days of Islam.

According to the Shias' belief, Ali inherited all the spiritual abilities of the Holy Prophet and was thus the only rightful successor of his. The Shias, therefore, reject the Khilafats of Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman and that of the Umayyad dynasty that followed.

The Shias do not accept many Hadiths of the Holy Prophet which were transmitted by A'isha, the wife of the Holy Prophet, whom they consider an enemy of Islam. The Shias also differ from the Sunni Muslims in many other areas such as the regulations governing the ablutions, Adhan, Prayer, pilgrimage and the declaring of one's faith.

The Shias also retain the pre-Islamic custom of legal temporary marriage for the sake of pleasure, called ***mut'ah.***

One important difference between the Sunnis and the Shias concerns the functions and status of the Khalifah. Shias believe that the physical descent of the Khalifah directly from Prophet Muhammad gave him divine endowment of wisdom, saintliness and grace. The Shias also consider the Khalifahs infallible and impeccable and regard them with a deeper veneration than do the Sunnis. The Sunnis looked at the Khalifah as a popular choice of the belivers and did not associate any supernatural powers with him. The Sunnis believed that the Khalifah must be from the Prophet's tribe, the Quraysh. The Shias chose their Khalifahs (or Imams) from a still narrower circle of the Prophet's immediate family.

Today, the Twelver Shias are predominant in Iran. Outside Iran, there are large Shia communities in Iraq, Pakistan, India and Lebanon.

The Sevener Shias

The division of the Shias into the Twelver and the Sevener sects occurred after their sixth Imam, Jafar al-Sadiq. At the death of Jafar al-Sadiq in 765 AD, the Twelvers made his younger brother, Musa al-Kazim, their seventh Imam. A dissenting group, later called the Seveners, followed the line of Jafar al-Sadiq's direct descendents. Since Jafar al-Sadiq's own son, Ismail, had predeceased him, the Seveners recognized the new Imam in the son of Ismail named Muhammad al-Mahdi. For this reason the Severner Shias are also referred to as the Ismailis.

The Ismailis developed highly esoteric doctrines around their Imam which could not be easily understood by the common man. The Ismailis continued to recognize their own Imams for the next 144 years, right through the period of the Abbasid Caliphate. Then in 909 AD, an Ismaili Imam by the name of Ubaydullah overthrew the Aghlabid dynasty centered in Tunis, took on the name of Ubadydullah al-Mahdi and established himself as the first Khalifah of the Fatimid dynasty in North Africa. In this way the institution of Khilafat was

also established among the Ismailis.

Then at the death of the Fatimid Khalifah al-Mustansir in 1095 AD, the Ismailis divided into two sects. The ones who followed the younger son of al-Mustansir by the name of al-Musta'li who became the next khalifah, are called Musta'lis. The others who followed the elder son by the name of al-Nizar who was imprisoned, are called Nizaris.

The Nizari Ismailis

The Nizaris took their leader al-Nizar into a mountain fortress and for a number of years led a life of secrecy and terror. They were notorious for carrying out well planned assassinations of their enemies and opponents. In 1817 AD, one Nizari Ismaili Imam was given the title of ***Agha Khan*** by Qajar Shah of Iran. This Imam later moved to India where his ***da'is*** or missionaries had considerable success in converting the local Hindu population to thier doctrines. Since then the title of Agha Khan has been retained by the Nizari Ismailis for their Imams.

The Musta'li Bohras

The Musta'lis continued to follow the direct line of al-Musta'li. But the visible line of Musta'li Imams ended in 1130 AD when al-Musta'li's son, al-Amir, died leaving only an infant son by the name of al-Tayyeb. The Fatimid Caliphate continued through the new Khalifah al-Hafiz who was the grandson of al-Mustansir. But since al-Hafiz and the other Khalifahs that followed him were not in direct line of descent from al-Musta'li, the Musta'li Shias did not recognize them as their Imams.

According to the Musta'li belief, the infant son of al-Amir is in hiding and is considered by them as the invisible Imam. The Musta'lis of Yemen managed to convert large numbers of Hindus in Gujrat, a province in western India. These converts are known in India and Pakistan as Bohras.

SECTION 5

HISTORY OF AHMADIYYAT

THE REVIVAL OF ISLAM

WHAT IS AHMADIYYAT?

Ahmadiyyat is a sect of Islam and not a new religion. Ahmadiyyat is a movement, entirely within the fold of Islam, meant to revive its true spirit and philosophy, to cleanse Islam of all superstitious and unnecessary beliefs and customs which had crept in over the past fourteen centuries, and, finally, to preach the religion of Islam to non-Muslims with the enthusiasm and zeal of the early Muslims.

The Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam was founded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, India, in 1889. The followers of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad believe that he is the same Messiah and Mahdi whose coming was foretold by Prophet Muhammad and was eagerly awaited by all Muslims. His followers call themselves Ahmadi Muslims, only to differentiate themselves from members of other Islamic sects, and strictly follow the orthodox religion of Islam.

As far as the fundamental beliefs or acts of worship are concerned, the Ahmadi Muslims have neither taken anything out nor added anything new to the religion of Islam. The Ahmadi Muslims make their declaration of faith by reciting the same ***kalima*** which was recited by the Prophet Muhammad himself; they say their Prayers and Fast in the same manner as the Holy Prophet of Islam did; and their Qiblah, their Ka'ba, their Azan and their Quran are all exactly the same as that of the other Muslims.

DIFFERENCES WITH SUNNI MUSLIMS

There are basically three beliefs held by Ahmadi Muslims which separate them from the mainstream of Sunni Islam. These three beliefs concern:

- the finality of Muhammad's prophethood.
- Jesus Christ's ascension to heaven, and
- the identity of the Promised Messiah

These three areas of contention between Ahmadi and Sunni Muslims are briefly described below:

The Finality of Muhammad's Prophethood

In verse 41 of Surah *al-Ahzab,* the Prophet Muhammad has been given the title of ***Khatam al-Nabiyyin*** or ***Seal of the Prophets.*** A majority of the Muslims interpret from this verse that Prophet Muhammad was chronologically the last Prophet and that no new Prophets can come after him. They also believe the phenomenon of prophetic revelation to be closed for ever.

According to the Ahmadi Muslims, the expression ***Seal of the Prophets*** does not mean that the Holy Prophet is chronologically the last Prophet. A seal is a mark of distinction and, in this case, implies great perfection of prophethood. Ahmadis believe that the door to prophethood is always open. However, a new prophet after the Prophet Muhammad must be a follower of his and must be from within the fold of Islam. **Ahmadi Muslims do believe** that the Prophet Muhammad was the last law giving Prophet and that no new law giving prophet can come after him.

Jesus Christ's Ascension to Heaven

The Sunni Muslims believe that Jesus was not put on the cross and that his place was actually taken by someone who resembled him. Jesus, according to them, was physically raised to heaven.

Ahmadis believe that Jesus was indeed put on the cross, but only for a few hours. They believe that Jesus, after recovering from his wounds, travelled east to Kashmir where he died a natural death and was buried in a tomb in Srinagar.

The Identity of the Promised Messiah

A majority of the Sunni Muslims believe that Jesus Christ himself will return one day in the form of the latter-day Messiah.

Ahmadi Muslims believe that since Jesus Christ has already died, it can only be someone else who can appear as the latter-day Messiah. Ahmadis believe that this Promised Messiah has already come in the person of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian.

These are the three important areas of contention between the Ahmadi and Sunni Muslims. In all other essential Islamic beliefs, the two groups hold more or less similar views.

WHAT IS MEANT BY THE "PROMISED" MESSIAH?

In the Hadith of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, there are numerous references to the coming of a latter-day Reformer who will cleanse the religion of Islam of all unnecessary customs and superstitions and restore to it the eminence and glory which it used to enjoy in the early days. This Reformer is referred to by various names and titles in the Hadith such as:

Mahdi
Messiah
Jesus son of Mary

The advent of this Reformer is so vividly described in the Hadith literature that Muslims of all sects and generations had been eagerly waiting for his appearance.

Since one of the names used for this Reformer in the Hadith is "Jesus son of Mary", many simple minded Muslims started believing that Jesus Christ himself will reappear in the latter days of Islam. When Mirza Ghulam Ahmad proclaimed in 1890 that he was the Messiah whose advent was promised in the Hadith of the Holy Prophet, a majority of the Muslims rejected his claim because they were looking forward to the second coming of Jesus Christ himself. In this respect these Muslims behaved like the Jews of two thousand years ago who had rejected Jesus' claim to prophethood because they, too, were waiting for the second coming of the Prophet Elijah.

After receiving many revelations to this effect, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad declared in 1890 that he was the same Messiah and Mahdi whose advent had been foretold by the Prophet Muhammad himself. He declared that he was in communion with God and constantly received His revelations and signs.

SIMILARITIES WITH JESUS CHRIST

A question arises as to why the latter-day reformer has been referred to by the name of "Isa ibn Maryam" (Jesus son of Mary), in the Hadith of the Holy Prophet. The reason is the great resemblance this latter-day reformer bears to Jesus Christ in a number of ways. If we look at their time settings, their teachings and their objectives, we find such a remarkable resemblance between the two as if the history is repeating itself. Some of the important areas in which the two prophets resemble each other are discussed below:

Relationship to the Law Giving Prophet

Jesus Christ was not a law giving prophet and came some 1400 years after the Prophet Moses, the greatest law giving prophet of the Israelites.

Similarly, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was not a law giving prophet and he, too, came some 1300 years after the Prophet Muhammad, the greatest law giving prophet of all times.

Reason for Rejection by the People

Jews of the day rejected Jesus' claim to prophethood because they were mistakenly waiting for the second coming of the Prophet Elijah himself.

Similarly, Muslims of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's time rejected his claim to Messiahship because they, too, were mistakenly waiting for the second coming of Jesus Christ himself

Objectives

The intention of Jesus Christ was to reform Judaism and not to found a new religion. It is not possible to found a new religion without giving the people a new Law. Jesus did not abrogate the Mosaic Law and, in fact, maintained its continued applicability to his own followers.

Similarly, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad came to reform the Islam of his day and not to found any new religion.

Teachings

Jesus' teachings emphasized the gentler elements of the Jewish religion, such as meekness, humility, charity, forgiveness and repentence. Jesus de-emphasized the harsher elements of the Mosaic Law which, with its restrictions and punishments, had come to be regarded more as a curse than as a blessing.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's teachings also emphasized the gentler elements of the religion of Islam such as patience, meekness, humility, forgiveness, charity and prayer. He, too, de-emphasized some of the harsher elements of Islamic history such as *jihad* with a weapon.

THE INSTITUTION OF MUJADDID IN ISLAM

A *mujaddid* is a person who renews or renovates the religion. According to a Hadith of the Holy Prophet, which has been recorded by Abu Daud, renovators will appear during every century of Islam:

> "Verily, God shall raise for this community, at the beginning of every century, one who will renovate for it its religion".

A list of the various Renovators who have appeared in the past fourteen hundred years, is given below. These mujaddids were the most outstanding saints and scholars of their time and did much to reform the religion of Islam, of their day.

In this list, only one Mujaddid is given for each century. Many Muslims, however, recognize more than one Mujaddid for some centuries. For example, two Mujaddids are recognized for the Second century of Islam: Ahmad bin Hanbal and Imam Sha'fi. Similarly, Abu Ubaid Naishapuri is included with Abu Bakr Baqlani as the two Mujaddids of the Fourth century. For the Seventh century, Mueenuddin Chishti is recognized along with Imam ibn Taymiyya, and for the Eighth century, Saleh bin Umar along with ibn Hajar Asqalani. Similarly, for the Ninth Century, Seyed Muhammad Jaunpuri is recognized along with Jalaluddin Sayuti. But for the Fourteenth

Century of Islam, which ended in the year 1980 A.D., no one other than Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian has ever been recognized as a Mujaddid.

LIST OF MUJADDIDS OF ISLAM

Century	Name of Mujaddid	Hijrah Dates	Christian Era
1st	Umar bin Abdul Aziz	60 - 101	717-720
2nd	Ahmad bin Hanbal	164 - 241	780 - 855
3rd	Abul Hasan Ashari	260 - 324	873 - 935
4th	Abu Bakr Baqlani	? - 403	? - 1013
5th	Al-Ghazali	450 - 505	1058-1111
6th	Abdul Qadir Jilani	470 - 561	1077-1166
7th	Ibn Taymiyya	661 - 728	1263-1328
8th	Ibn Hajar Asqalani	773 - 852	1372-1449
9th	Jalaluddin Sayuti	?	?
10th	Muhammad Tahir Gujrati	?	?
11th	Ahmad Sirhindi	971-1034	1564-1624
12th	Shah Wali-allah	1113-1175	1702-1762
13th	Ahmad Brelwi	1201-1246	1786-1831
14th	Mirza Ghulam Ahmad	1251-1326	1835-1908

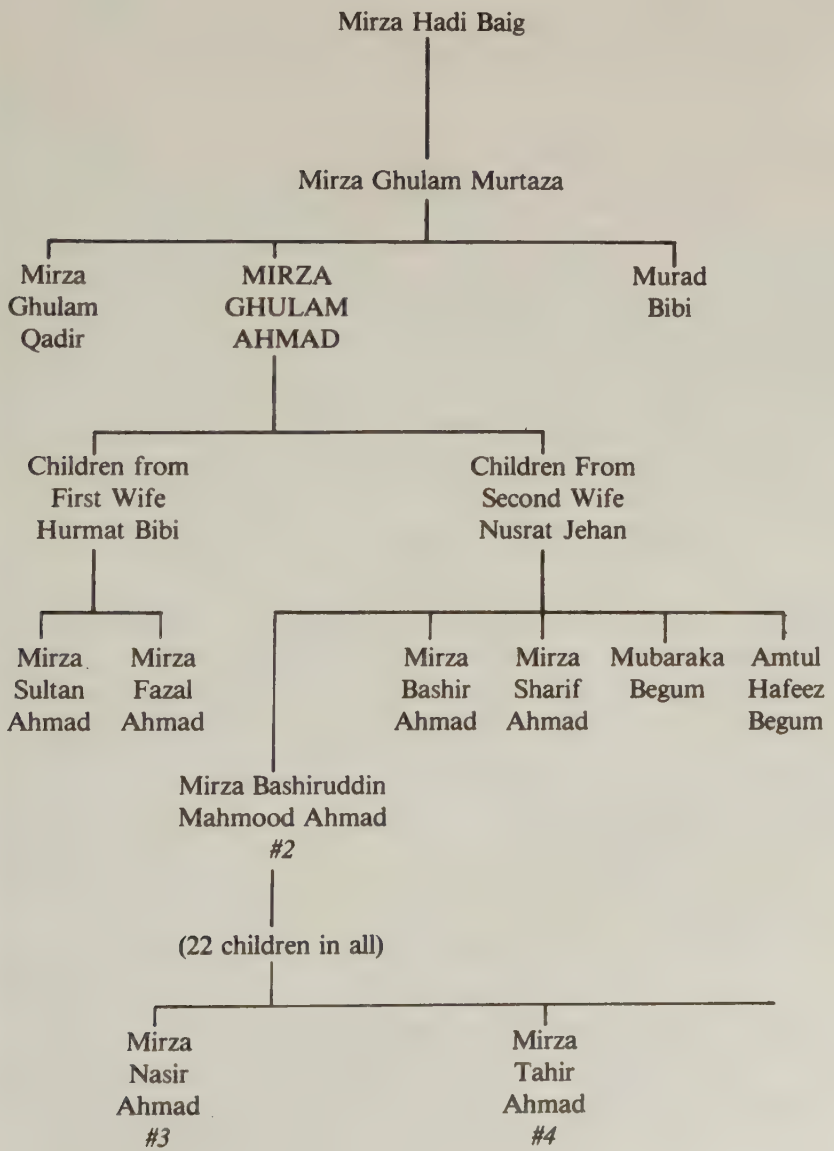
BIRTH OF MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was born at Qadian, India, on February 13, 1835. He was born immediately after a twin sister named Jannat Bibi, who died a few days later. Mohyuddin ibn al-Arabi, a great Muslim mystic of Spain, had prophesied that the Promised Messiah would be born a twin. The name of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's father was Mirza Ghulam Murtaza and his mother's, Chiragh Bibi. He had an older brother by the name of Mirza Ghulam Qadir and a sister named Murad Bibi.

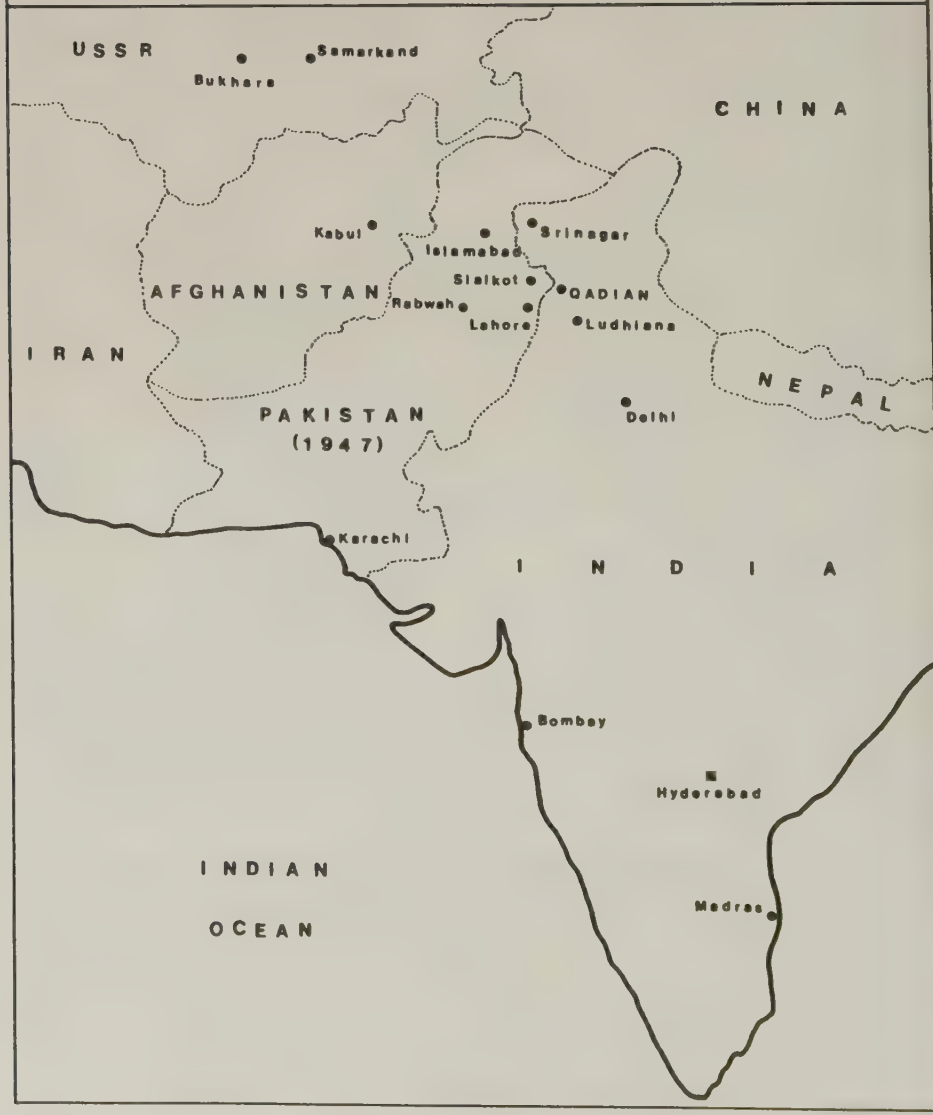
A distant ancestor of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, by the name of Mirza

THE FAMILY TREE OF HAZRAT MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD

The three Khalifahs of the Promised Messiah, after Maulvi Nooruddin, are shown below by numbers



QADIAN AND SURROUNDINGS



Hadi Baig, came to India from Samarkand in the latter part of the sixteenth century. This occurred soon after Babar, also from the Samarkand region, had established himself as the first Moghul Emperor in India. Mirza Hadi Baig settled with his companions near River Beas, about seventy miles east of Lahore, and founded a village by the name of Islampur. Later on this place came to be known as Islampur Qadi which, in the course of time, got shortened to Qadian. At the time of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's birth, Qadian was merely a small village without electricity, paved roads or railway line. The nearest connection with the outside world was through a place called Batala, eleven miles away.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was the thirteenth descendent of Mirza Hadi Baig. During the Moghul rule in India, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's ancestors held responsible posts at the royal court and had control over a large area around Qadian. At the rise of the Sikh rule in Panjab, his family started to lose control of this territory, which was eventually confiscated in the nineteenth century by the British Government in India. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's father spent his entire life in litigation trying to regain possession of his ancestral estate. He spent a great deal of money and effort towards this end but did not gain much.

EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad received all his education at home. His religious education started at an early age of six when a tutor, by the name of Fazal Ilahi, was retained to teach him the Holy Quran and the Persian language.

When he was ten years old, another teacher by the name of Fazal Ahmad taught him Arabic grammar. At age seventeen, he received instruction in more of Arabic grammar and something of logic, by another tutor named Gul Ali Shah. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's father, being an experienced physician, instructed him in the field of natural medicine.

Although Mirza Ghulam Ahmad could swim and ride, he was not really fond of games or sports. Right from very early age, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was given to studying the Holy Quran, the Hadith of

the Holy Prophet, and other religious literature. Even at this young age his favourite passtime was praying and studying.

FIRST MARRIAGE

According to the custom of the time, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was married at an early age of sixteen, to his cousin named Hurmat Bibi. From this first marriage, two sons were born: Mirza Sultan Ahmad (1853-1931) and Mirza Fazal Ahmad (1855-1904). Neither of these sons performed the *Bai'at* during the lifetime of the Promised Messiah. Mirza Fazal Ahmad passed away four years before his father's death while Mirza Sultan Ahmad eventually performed the *Bai'at* at the hand of Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad, the Second Successor of the Promised Messiah.

Even after the marriage, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad continued to spend most of his time in seclusion, prayer and meditation. The first marriage of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was not a happy one and eventually resulted in permanent separation.

CIVIL SERVICE JOB IN SIALKOT

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's father wanted him to learn some worldly knowledge and obtain some lucrative post in line with ancestral tradition, but he had no such desire. His father eventually secured him a government post as a Reader in a court in Sialkot. In deference to his father's wishes, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad took up this position in 1864, at the age of 29. He worked at Sialkot for about four years but his heart was never in his job. He spent all his spare time in worship, in the study of religious books and in carrying out discussions and debates with the Christian missionaries in the area.

In 1868 he learned of his mother's serious illness back in Qadian. He immediately resigned from his job and returned to Qadian. His mother, however, passed away before his arrival.

START OF REVELATIONS

The spiritual experiences of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad began in his early youth when he started having true dreams and visions. In these

dreams he met various saints and prophets including the Holy Prophet Muhammad. It was, however, in 1865 at the age of thirty, that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad received his first revelation which concerned his age:

> "Eighty years or thereabouts, or a little more. And you will see your distant progeny."

The above revelation was in the Arabic language. A few years later, in 1869, he received another important revelation in Urdu:

> "I shall bestow blessing upon blessing on thee, so much so that kings will seek blessings from thy garments."

In the beginning, his revelations were short and infrequent, followed by long silent intervals. Gradually, the frequency as well as the length of his revelations increased. The written contents of some of his individual revelations run for many pages. In his lifetime, he received revelations mostly in Urdu and Arabic languages with some in Persian and a few even in English.

After the death of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, a collection of all his dreams, visions and revelations was compiled from various publications into one volume called ***Tadhkirah.*** Many of his revelations were repetition of the Quranic verses. The purpose was to emphasize certain meanings and implications of these verses which applied to a particular set of circumstances. A great number of his revelations and visions contain prophecies regarding future events. Many of these prophecies were fulfilled during the lifetime of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad or soon afterwards. But some of his prophecies concern the future and still await fulfillment. A great many of his revelations contain statements of extreme love and endearment which God displayed for Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

FASTING AND DEVOTION

In the year 1875, at the age of forty, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad kept fasts over a period of eight or nine months. He gradually reduced his daily food to just half a piece of bread and intensified his prayers and devotions. As a result, God blessed him with great insight into the spiritual secrets and he met many prophets and saints in his visions.

DEATH OF FATHER

In the year 1876, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was in Lahore when he had a dream. From this dream he concluded that his father was about to pass away. He hastened back to Qadian and found that although his father was ill, it did not appear that his illness was very serious. The next day, at noon, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad received the following Quranic verse in a revelation:

"We call to witness the heaven and that which appears by night." (86:2)

With this revelation he was also given the understanding that it referred to the death of his father which was to occur that day after sunset. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was greatly troubled by this revelation and naturally wondered about the cessation of certain sources of income which were available only during his father's lifetime. Immediately, he received another revelation of the following Quranic verse:

"Is not God sufficient for His servant?" (39:37)

This revelation gave him great comfort and satisfaction. That day, after sunset, his father passed away in accordance with his revelation.

ADHERENCE TO TRUTH

An incident took place in 1878 which demonstrates how truthful and honest Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was in his everyday life. It so happened that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad once sent a manuscript to a printer by mail, at the rate prescribed for parcels. In it he also enclosed a letter, addressed to the printer, giving certain instructions for the printing of the manuscript. He was not aware that postal regulations forbade the inclusion of letters in any material sent at the parcel rate. The owner of the printing press was an opponent of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and made a complaint against him to the postal authorities.

A case was filed against Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and he was summoned to the court to answer the charges. The lawyer who was representing his case, advised him to deny that he had placed any letter

in the parcel. But Mirza Ghulam Ahmad immediately rejected this advice telling his lawyer that he could not deviate from the truth and make a false statement for fear of punishment. His lawyer told him that in that case there would not be any hope for acquittal since he would be admitting to the breaking of the postal regulations.

Later in the court, when he was questioned by the magistrate, he admitted that he had placed the letter in the parcel but explained that he did not know that he was breaking a postal regulation and had no intention of defrauding the Post Office. The court was so impressed by his forthrightness and honesty that the case against him was dropped and Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was acquitted.

WRITING OF 'BRAHIN-E AHMADIYYA'

Around the latter half of the nineteenth century, Islam in India was being ruthlessly attacked by the Christians and the Arya Samaj, a militant sect of the Hindus. Under the favourable climate of the British rule, the Christian missionaries were spreading their religion with great force and speed. The Muslims in India were completely heedless to this deteriorating situation and Islam in that country was indeed in a sorry state.

It was in such circumstances that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad took up his pen in defense of Islam and to prove its excellences. For this reason he started writing a great book called ***Brahin-e Ahmadiyya,*** meaning Proofs of Ahmadiyyat. The four volumes of this book were published between 1880 and 1884 while the fifth volume was published in 1905.

Aside from some articles he had been contributing to the local journals, *Brahin-e Ahmadiyya* was Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's first major writing. In this book he presented proofs of the truth of the Holy Quran and of the prophethood of Muhammad. In this book he also threw a challenge, accompanied by a prize of 10,000 rupees, to any non-Muslim who could refute these arguments and could produce even one-fifth as many proofs in favour of his own religion.

Overnight, the publication of *Brahin-e Ahmadiyya* brought great fame and respect to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and people began to look at him as a great champion of Islam. He went on to write more than

eighty books over the next 28 years. All this voluminous literature was intended for the revival of Islam and presenting its excellence and superiority over all other religions. Most of his books were written in the Urdu language while some twenty books were written in Arabic.

APPOINTED AS A REFORMER

Although Mirza Ghulam Ahmad had been seeing visions and receiving revelations for some time, his real mission and status had not yet been made apparent to him. It was in March 1882, when he was 47 years old, that his true station began to be revealed to him.

> "God bless thee, O Ahmad... The Gracious God has taught thee the Quran so that you should warn the people whose ancestors have not been warned... Proclaim: I have been commissioned and I am the first of the believers...
>
> "He it is Who has sent His Messenger with guidance and the true faith so that He should make it prevail over all faiths... We shall suffice thee against those who mock at thee... This is a mercy from thy Lord. He will perfect His bounty upon thee so that it should be a sign for the believers. You have appeared with clear vision from your Lord so give glad tidings to people ... Tell them: "If you love God, then follow me, God will then love you...'
>
> "God praises thee from His Throne. We praise thee and call down blessings on thee... I am with thee and be thou with Me wherever thou may be... God will exalt thy name and perfect His bounty upon thee in this world and the hereafter... Give glad tidings to those who have believed that they have the station of righteousness before thy Lord. Recite to them whatever has been revealed to thee from thy Lord".

With this revelation of March 1882, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad realized that he was being appointed by God as the Mujaddid or Reformer of the fourteenth century of Islam. At this stage he did not make any specific public claim; his status as the Promised Messiah was yet to be revealed to him in another eight years. He, however, intensified his

prayers and worship and devoted all his time towards his writings and preaching the truth and the excellence of Islam.

SECOND MARRIAGE

The first marriage of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, which had taken place when he was sixteen years old, had ended in a permanent separation. Around the year 1881, when he was 46 years old, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad started to receive revelations regarding his second marriage:

> "We give thee glad tidings of a noble son"
>
> "Be grateful for My bounty that you have found My Khadijah"
>
> "I have determined to arrange another wedding for you. I shall make all the arrangements and you will not be put to any trouble"

Under the Divine Will, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad married a second time on November 17, 1884. He was 49 years old at the time. His second wife, Nusrat Jehan Begum, came from a noble Sayyed family of Delhi. From this second wife ten children were born whose names are given below:

1.	Ismat Bibi	Apr. 15, 1886	1891
2.	Bashir Ahmad	Aug. 7, 1887	Nov. 4, 1888
3.	Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad	Jan. 12, 1889	Nov. 8, 1965
4.	Shaukat Bibi	1891	1892
5.	Mirza Bashir Ahmad	Apr. 20, 1893	Sept. 2, 1963
6.	Mirza Sharif Ahmad	May 24, 1895	Dec. 26, 1961
7.	Mubaraka Begum	Mar. 2, 1897	May 23, 1977
8.	Mirza Mubarak Ahmad	Jun. 14, 1899	Sep. 16, 1907
9.	Amtul Naseer	Jan. 28, 1903	Dec. 3, 1903
10.	Amtul Hafeez Begum	Jun. 25, 1904	May 6, 1987

Five of the above ten children died in infancy or early childhood; the surviving five, three males and two females, lived to ripe old ages.

Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad, the oldest of the five surviving children, became the Second Khalifah of the Promised Messiah and served in this capacity for over fifty years.

Nusrat Jehan Begum, the second wife of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, died on April 20, 1952, in Rabwah, Pakistan. She was 86 years old at the time.

SOLITARY RETREAT IN HOSHIARPUR

In January 1886, at the age of 51, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad travelled to Hoshiarpur with the intention of spending some time in a solitary retreat. In a house on the outskirts of Hoshiarpur, he isolated himself for a period of forty days. During this time his food was placed outside his door and no visitors were allowed to see him. He spent all this time in intense meditation and worship and was in constant communion with God and received many revelations. He supplicated to his Lord to give him a sign for the truth of Islam. It was during this solitary retreat that he was given the glad tidings of a great son to be born to him who is known, in the history of Ahmadiyyat, as the "Promised Son" or the "Promised Reformer".

> "I confer upon thee a sign of My mercy according to thy supplications. I have heard thy entreaties and have accepted thy prayers with My mercy and have blessed this thy journey.
>
> "A sign of power, mercy, nearness to Me is bestowed on thee; a sign of grace and beneficence is awarded to thee and thou art granted the key of success and victory...
>
> "Rejoice therefore that a handsome and pure boy will be bestowed upon thee; you will receive a bright youth who will be of thy seed and will be of thy progeny.
>
> "A handsome and pure boy will come as your guest. His name is Emmanuel and Bashir. He has been invested with a holy spirit, and he will be free from all impurity. He is the light of God. Blessed is he who comes from heaven.
>
> "He will be accompanied by grace which shall arrive with him. He will be characterized with grandeur, greatness and

wealth. He will come into the world and will heal many of their disorders through his Messianic qualities and through the blessings of the Holy Spirit. He is the Word of God for God's mercy and honour have equipped him with the Word of Majesty. He will be extremely intelligent and understanding and will be meek of heart and will be endowed with secular and spiritual knowledge...

"Son, delight of the heart, high ranking, noble; a manifestation of the First and the Last, a manifestation of the True and the High; as if God has descended from heaven. His advent will be greatly blessed and will be a source of manifestation of Divine Majesty. Behold, a light comes; a light anointed by God with the perfume of His pleasure. We shall pour Our Spirit into him and he will be sheltered under the shadow of God. He will grow rapidly and will be the means of procuring the release of those held in bondage. His fame will spread to the ends of the earth and nations will be blessed through him. Then he shall be raised to his spiritual station in heaven. This is a matter decreed"

In a second announcement, two days later, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad declared that this promised son will be born within a period of nine years.

Two months after the announcement regarding the birth of the promised son, a daughter named Ismat Bibi was born to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. His enemies rejoiced at her birth and took this opportunity to ridicule and defame him. Many of his opponents started saying that the prophecy was falsified by the birth of the daughter.

Then, one and a half year after the famous announcement, a son was born to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and was named Bashir Ahmad. This son, too, died little over a year later and the enemies of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad again raised a commotion in order to discredit him. They all started saying that the boy who had died was the one who should have lived to become the Promised Reformer. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad responded to these accusations by saying that he had never claimed that this Bashir Ahmad was indeed the Promised Son and that all he

had prophesied was that such a son will be born within a period of nine years.

In due course of time, the Promised Son was born to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad on January 12, 1889, within the specified period of nine years and was named Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad. He eventually became the Second Successor of the Promised Messiah and served in this capacity for a period of over fifty years. On receiving a revelation in 1944, Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad declared in a public address that he indeed was the Promised Son whose birth was prophesied by the Promised Messiah in 1886. We will read more about the Promised Son in the section on Promised Messiah's Successors.

COMMANDED TO TAKE THE BAI'AT

In 1888, some six years after being appointed as a Reformer, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was commanded by God to start taking the *Bai'at* or the oath of allegience. In an announcement printed on green paper and published on December 1, 1888, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad said:

> "I have been commanded that the seekers after truth should enter into covenant of *Bai'at* with me for the purpose of learning the way of true faith, true purity and the love of the Lord and of discarding an evil, slothful and disloyal life.
>
> "Therefore, those who perceive such strength in themselves should come forward to me. I shall be the sharer of their sorrows and shall try to lighten their burdens. God will bless them through my prayers and my attention towards them provided they are wholeheartedly ready to comply with the conditions of the covenant which are divinely determined"

By taking the Bai'at or the oath of allegience, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was laying the foundation of a movement which will be made up of people completely devoted to the cause of Islam in every respect. Before accepting any Bai'at, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad announced, on January 12, 1889, the ten conditions of initiation into the Movement. A newcomer to the Movement was asked to abide by the following conditions:

1. To abstain from ***shirk*** or setting up partners with God
2. To keep away from falsehood, adultery, cruelty, dishonesty, riot, rebellion and every kind of evil
3. To offer the five Daily Prayers and also the ***tahajjud*** Prayer if able to do so
4. Not to harm God's creatures in general and Muslims in particular, by one's actions or by words
5. To stay faithful to God in sorrow or pleasure, prosperity or adversity, happiness or misfortune
6. Not to follow vulgar customs, to abstain from evil inclinations, to submit to the authority of the Holy Quran and to make the sayings of God and His Messenger the guiding principles of one's life
7. To completely discard pride and haughtiness and to pass one's days with humility, lowliness, courtesy and meekness
8. To consider the religion, the honour of religion and the well-being of Islam dearer than one's life, wealth and children
9. To show sympathy to God's creatures and to use one's natural talents for their welfare
10. To establish a brotherhood with Mirza Ghulam Ahmad on condition of obeying him in everything good, till the day of one's death.

These were the ten conditions of the Bai'at which every one intending to enter the Movement had to abide by.

THE FOUNDING OF AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT

After publishing the ten conditions of the Bai'at, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad travelled to Ludhiana in March 1889 and issued another leaflet. In this leaflet he said that he would stay in the town at a house near that of Munshi Ahmad Jan's, a disciple of his. Those who wished to become his followers were asked to come to the house for an oath of allegience. He explained the meaning, the necessity and the importance of the Bai'at, in the following words:

"God wishes to found a community of the faithful to

manifest His glory and power. He will make the community grow and prosper and will cause it to establish the love of God, righteousness, purity, peace and good-will among men. This shall be a group of men devoted to God. He shall strengthen them with His own Spirit and bless them and purify them. He shall multiply them exceedingly ... He shall make the Community grow, so much so that its numbers and progress shall amaze the world. My true followers shall excell every other people. There shall always rise among them, till the Day of Judgment, persons who will be the chosen ones of God in every respect"

The formal ceremony of the Bai'at started on March 23, 1889. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad sat in one corner of the room while his disciples were called in, one by one. The ceremony was extremely simple. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad would stretch out his right hand which was then held by the disciple who would repeat the following words in Urdu after him:

"I repent today at the hand of Ahmad, of all the sins and bad habits to which I was addicted; and most truthfully and solemnly do I promise that, to the last day of my life, I shall avoid, to the best of my ability, all manner of sin. I will hold my faith above all worldly considerations. I shall try, as far as I can, to observe the ten conditions of Bai'at laid down in the leaflet dated January 12, 1889. I seek forgiveness of God for my past sins".

After this, the disciple would reapeat the following words in Arabic:

"I ask forgiveness of God, my Lord,

"I ask forgiveness of God, my Lord,

"I ask forgiveness of God, my Lord, for all my sins and turn to Him. I bear witness that there is none worthy of worship except God. He is One, without partners and I bear witness that Muhammad is His Servant and Messenger. My Lord, I have wronged my soul and I confess all my sins. Do thou forgive me my sins as there is none other who can forgive".

After taking this oath from the disciple, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad would lift up his hands in prayer and thus the ceremony of the Bai'at would be completed for each follower. The very first person who took the Bai'at at the hands of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was Maulvi Nooruddin who was his most devoted follower and eventually succeeded him as his First Successor.

On March 23, 1889, some forty persons performed the Bai'at and thus was laid the foundation of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam. This Movement, which started with a handful of devouts in the late 1800s, has today grown into millions of adherents spread all over the world. The Movement has established missions and mosques in numerous countries of the world, built schools and hospitals in many African nations, translated the Holy Quran in many languages, and is zealously preaching the religion of Islam in every corner of the world. The unusual success of the Movement is a living proof of God's support for this otherwise humble and resourceless community.

CLAIM TO MESSIAHSHIP

Early in 1890, God revealed to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad that Jesus Christ had died a natural death and that the belief that he was still alive in heaven was false. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad announced this fact openly to the world and declared that Jesus son of Mary could not possibly come back to life as the latter-day Messiah. He told the world that the prophecy of the Holy Prophet regarding the coming of a Mahdi and a Messiah had been fulfilled in his own person. He further proclaimed that God had appointed him to bring about a reform in the world and to re-establish the supremacy and glory of the religion of Islam.

As proof for his claim, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad presented many arguments. He explained that just as the Prophet Elijah did not come back to life himself and his second coming was in fact realized in the appearance of John the Baptist, similarly, Jesus Christ would not reappear himself and his second coming could only be realized in the appearance of someone else with the characteristics and qualities of Jesus. As further proof, he produced numerous references in the writings of early Muslim scholars and in the sacred books of other religions, all of which attested to the truthfulness of his claim.

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's claim to Messiahship received a mixed response from the public. Those who were honest and sincere could not find any fault with his claim and eventually entered his fold. But there were many other people who, for various reasons, did not accept his claim and denounced him as an unbeliever and a non-Muslim. The Christian missionaries opposed him for he had proved that Jesus was a mortal being like the rest of us and could not possibly be the Son of God in the literal sense of the phrase. Muslim mullahs also opposed him since they saw in him a threat to their own dogmatic teachings and power.

ANNUAL GATHERING INSTITUTED

On December 27, 1891, a gathering of the Ahmadiyya Movement was held in Qadian, India, in which 75 persons participated. The conference was a great success and the Promised Messiah announced that such a gathering of the community should be held every year for three days during the Christmas holidays. Since then, this annual gathering has been held more or less without any break and the number of participants has steadily grown. The last Annual Gathering held during the lifetime of the Promised Messiah, in 1907, was attended by some 2,000 followers. In the recent Annual Gathering held at Rabwah, Pakistan, the number of participants reached a quarter million people.

In these annual gatherings, the Ahmadiyya community reviews the work done in the previous year and listens to talks and speeches presented by learned scholars and the Khalifah on topics covering Islam, Ahmadiyyat, comparative religions, and economic, social and political problems and their remedies. The Ahmadi Muslims participating in these gatherings come from all parts of the world. They take this opportunity not only to increase their religious knowledge and spiritual energy but also revive old friendships and establish new relations of love, affection and Islamic brotherhood. With many Ahmadis now living outside India and Pakistan, annual gatherings are also organized in various other countries.

PROPHECY REGARDING PANDIT LEKH RAM

Pandit Lekh Ram was a leader of Arya Samaj. Arya Samaj was a highly militant and dogmatic sect of Hinduism which fiercely attacked both Islam and Christianity because they were attracting too many converts, especially from the lower castes. Pandit Lekh Ram was a persistent enemy of Islam and always used the foulest language in attacking the character of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. Many a times the Promised Messiah tried to correct him on this point but he would not listen. Finally, on February 20, 1893, the Promised Messiah made the following announcement concerning Pandit Lekh Ram:

> "Within six years from today, this man will be overtaken by severe torment as a punishment for the disrespect which he has shown towards the Holy Prophet.
>
> "Now by announcing the prophecy I am seeking to inform all Muslims, Christians and followers of other religions that if this person is not overtaken within the period of six years from today by a torment that should be distinguishable from ordinary sufferings and should bear an extraordinary character and should be in the nature of Divine punishment, then it might be concluded that I have not been sent from God"

In another revelation God informed the Promised Messiah that this reckoning will occur on the day next to the day of the Eid festival.

Even after the announcement of the prophecy in his regard, Pandit Lekh Ram did not mend his ways and continued to make vile remarks in his writings about the Prophet Muhammad, the Holy Quran and Islam. He even made a prophecy of his own that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad will die of cholera within three years and that his children will not survive.

What Pandit Lekh Ram had prophesied did not, of course, come to pass. The Promised Messiah did not die within the specified period and his children did indeed survive. The Promised Messiah's prophecy, however, was fulfilled word for word. Pandit Lekh Ram met his fateful end on March 6, 1897, on the day following the festive day of Eid al-Adha. He was fatally stabbed by an unknown person in

his own house and the assailant could not be apprehended. The fulfillment of this prophecy was a great sign of the truth of the Promised Messiah.

SIGN OF THE ECLIPSES

In a Hadith of the Holy Prophet, one of the signs of the appearance of the Mahdi relates to the darkening of the sun and the moon during the month of Ramadhan. This Hadith was recorded by *Darqutni* and goes as follows:

> "For our Mahdi there are appointed two signs which have never been manifested for any other claimant since the creation of the heavens and the earth. One is the eclipse of the moon on the first of Ramadhan and the other is the eclipse of the sun in the middle of Ramadhan. These two signs have not appeared since the creation of the heavens and the earth"

An eclipse of the moon normally occurs on the 13th, 14th or 15th night of a lunar month near the time of the full moon. An eclipse of the sun takes place on the 27th, 28th or 29th day of the lunar month, near the time of the new moon. According to the Hadith of the Holy Prophet, the lunar eclipse was to occur on the 13th (the first of the appointed nights), and the solar eclipse was to occur on the 28th (the middle of the appointed days), of the month of Ramadhan.

This heavenly sign was fulfilled during the time of the Promised Messiah, in exactly the way described in the Hadith. The moon was eclipsed on the 13th of Ramadhan, 1311 Hijrah (corresponding to March 21, 1894), and the sun was eclipsed on the 28th of Ramadhan (April 6, 1894). It should be noted that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is the only person in history who has claimed this heavenly sign in support of his claim.

DISCOVERIES REGARDING BABA NANAK

Baba Nanak, born in India in the fifteenth century, is considered by the Sikhs as the founder of their religion. The Promised Messiah's research and investigations regarding the Sikh religion demonstrated

that Baba Nanak in fact was a Muslim saint who observed all the rituals and commandments of Islam. He showed the world that Baba Nanak, though born in a Hindu family, had accepted Islam. Baba Nanak believed in the Unity of God, offered the Daily Prayers and carried out all other duties of Islam including the pilgrimage to Mecca. Although Baba Nanak always preached the religion of Islam to his followers, they, however, deviated from his true teachings because of their political conflict with the Muslim Moghuls of India.

Another piece of evidence which the Promised Messiah presented to the world concerns a cotton cloak of Baba Nanak considered a sacred relic by the Sikhs. In 1865, the Promised Messiah went to Dera Baba Nanak, a small village not too far from Qadian, where this cloak is kept. When the cloak was opened, it displayed the *kalima* and other Quranic verses written on it.

The Promised Messiah explained all these findings regarding Baba Nanak and the Sikh religion in his book ***Sat Bachan,*** meaning the True Word, in the language of the Sikhs. This book was published in November 1895.

CONFERENCE OF RELIGIONS

At the end of 1896, a three day conference on religions took place in Lahore in which representatives of the various faiths were invited to present papers dealing with the following five basic themes:

1. The physical, moral and spiritual conditions of man.
2. The state of man after death.
3. The object of man's life and the means of its attainment.
4. The effect of human actions in this life and in the hereafter.
5. The means of achieving spiritual knowledge.

The purpose of this conference was to allow the public at large to see the relative merits of the various religions. The Promised Messiah, being one of the invitees, prepared an essay on Islam covering these basic themes. While he was still writing the essay, he received a revelation:

"The essay has come out best"

From this he concluded that his paper would excel all others at the conference. Before the start of the conference, the Promised Messiah fell ill and could not personally attend it. He, therefore, appointed one of his followers, Munshi Abdul Karim, to read the paper on his behalf.

Many well known religious scholars participated in this conference which took on the aspect of a tournament of religions. When the Promised Messiah's essay was read on the second day of the conference, the audience applauded it warmly and the Indian press gave it an excellent review. Since the essay was more than 150 pages long, its reading could not be completed that day. At the request of the audience, the program of the conference was extended by one more day. During the two days, the reading of the Promised Messiah's essay took seven and a half hours.

This essay was later published under the title ***Islami Usool ki Philosophy,*** meaning The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam.

ACCUSATION OF MURDER BY DR. MARTIN CLARK

Some Christian missionaries in India saw that the Promised Messiah was slowly gaining ground against them. When they felt that their efforts to refute his arguments were futile, they resorted to cheap tactics. Dr. Henry Martin Clark was a Christian missionary working in Amritsar. In August 1897, Dr. Clark brought a charge against the Promised Messiah in the court of the District Magistrate. Dr. Clark accused Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of instigating a young man by the name of Abdul Hamid to murder him.

The case eventually came up before the court of Captain M. W. Douglas, the Deputy Commissioner of Gurdaspur. Abdul Hamid was properly tutored by the opposition and told a prerehearsed story to the court. Captain Douglas, however, felt uneasy about the testimony of Abdul Hamid and asked the District Superintendent of Police to question him.

On interrogation, the youth burst into tears and admitted that he had been lying throughout the case. He then made a full statement saying that he was pressured by other people to lie against Mirza

Ghulam Ahmad. After this, Captain Douglas acquitted the Promised Messiah with due honour and the case against him was discharged.

It is interesting to note that while the enemies were levelling charges of murder against the Promised Messiah, his own behaviour towards them was that of a gentleman. During the trial Maulvi Muhammad Husain of Batala, an enemy of the Promised Messiah, appeared as a witness against him. While Maulvi Muhammad Husain was in the witness box, the defense counsel retained by the Promised Messiah started to cross examine him. The defense counsel wanted to show the court that Maulvi Muhammad Husain did not enjoy a good reputation in private life. For this purpose the defense counsel asked him a question which would have brought out a self-humiliating answer. But, before the witness could answer, the Promised Messiah rose from his chair and at once stopped his own counsel from taking this liberty with the personal honour of the witness. Although the witness was one of his staunchest enemies, the Promised Messiah would not allow his weakness to be exposed in public. This is an excellent example of the true Islamic character of the Promised Messiah.

NEWSPAPERS OF THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT

The very first newspaper of the Ahmadiyya Movement was called *Al-Hakam* and was published for the first time in October 1897. Sheikh Yaqub Ali Irfani was its editor. The paper was initially published from Amritsar but later on was transferred to Qadian. Five years later, in 1902, another newspaper called *Al-Badar* was started from Qadian. The first editor of *Al-Badar* was Mufti Muhammad Sadiq and the paper continues to be published from Qadian to this very day.

Both these newspapers played a historical role in recording the speeches, revelations, addresses and conversations of the Promised Messiah and in preserving the early history of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam.

CHALLENGE TO JOHN ALEXANDER DOWIE

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, John Alexander Dowie had established himself in the United States of America as a healer,

prophet, and the fore-runner of Jesus Christ. He had founded his own Christian sect and had taken up the title of Elijah III.

Dowie was a bitter enemy of Islam and of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. He used to express his belief in this regard in the vilest possible language and used to advocate the total destruction of Muslims and the religion of Islam. When the Promised Messiah came to know of Dowie's claims, he confronted him with the following challenge in September 1902:

> "... There is no need for Mr. Dowie to subject the millions of Muslims to destruction. There is a very easy way to determine whether Dowie's god is true or our God. That is that Mr. Dowie should pray that of the two of us, the one who is false may die before the other. Dowie believes in Jesus as God and I consider him a humble creature and a prophet. The matter in issue is, which one of us two is in the right?
>
> "The method I propose is that Mr. Dowie should come into the field against me with the permission of his false god ... If the false god of Mr. Dowie possesses any power he will certainly permit him to come forth against me "

This challenge of the Promised Messiah was given great publicity in the American press. Dowie, however, gave no reply to the challenge. A year later, in August 1903, the Promised Messiah published another statement addressed to Mr. Dowie:

> "I do not say merely out of my own mouth that I am the Promised Messiah. God, Who has created the heavens and the earth, bears witness for me... I have thousands of His testimonies in my support which I cannot number. One testimony is that if Mr. Dowie will accept my challenge and will put himself in opposition to me expressly or by implication, he will depart this life with great sorrow and torment during my lifetime.
>
> "Dowie has not so far replied to my challenge nor has he referred to it in his paper. I, therefore, grant him time for seven months from today, the 23rd of August 1903. If during this period he comes forth in opposition to me and makes an

announcement in his paper that he accepts fully the plan that I have put forward, the world shall soon see the end of this contest.

"If Mr. Dowie runs away from this contest, I would call upon the people of America and Europe as witness that this would also be considered his defeat, and in such case it should be concluded that his claim of being Elijah is a mere boast and deceit.

"I close these brief remarks with the following prayer: O Powerful and Perfect God, Who has ever been revealing and will ever continue to reveal Thyself to Thy prophets, do Thou give Thy judgment and show to Thy people the imposture and falsehood of Dowie"

At last, in December 1903, Mr. Dowie made the following announcement:

"In India there is a Muhammedan Messiah who keeps writing to me that Jesus Christ lies buried in Kashmir. People ask me why do I not send him the necessary reply? Do you think that I should answer such gnats and flies? If I were to put my foot on them I would trample them to death. The fact is that I merely give them a chance to fly away and survive"

The challenge was finally acknowledged by Dowie. From that day on, Dowie suffered a gradual decline of all his affairs. His health began to deteriorate, his followers began to have doubts and questioned his claims, and he began to experience financial difficulties. In 1905, he suffered a severe stroke and was paralyzed, his wife and children deserted him and he was charged with many immoral practices. Finally, on March 9, 1907, Dowie died a miserable death and another prophecy of the Promised Messiah was thus fulfilled.

THE WILL

Towards the end of the year 1905, the Promised Messiah received repeated revelations intimating him of his own death:

"Only a little is left from the term appointed by your Lord"

"Only a few days are left. All will be saddened on that day"

"The end of thy appointed term is approaching and We shall not leave any cause of humiliation for thee"

"Thy time is near and We shall keep up for thee clear signs"

In December 1905, the Promised Messiah wrote a booklet called *Al-Wasiyyat*—The Will, in which he recorded his last testament to the Ahmadiyya community. In it he urged the members of the Community to bring about a change for the better in their lives and to live up to the standard demanded by Islam. He also told them that on his departure from this world, God would send His second manifestation to the world. He instructed the community to be sympathetic towards each other and to get rid of their low passions. He further said:

> "Do not think that God will let you go waste. You are the seed that God has planted with his own hands. God says that this seed will grow and blossom and its branches will spread out to all directions and it will become a big tree. Blessed are those who believe in what God says and do not fear the trials that come in between "

In the Will, the Promised Messiah made a mention of a vision of his and said that he had been shown a site which was going to be his grave. In this vision he saw an angel who was measuring the land and after reaching a certain spot which was shining like silver, the angel said that this was his grave. He was also shown a piece of land which the angel said was the ***Bahishti Maqbarah*** or a "graveyard of the inmates of paradise". He was told that his sincere followers will be buried in this graveyard.

In the Will, the Promised Messiah laid down the conditions for burial in that graveyard. In addition to being a good follower of Islamic principles, one who wished to be buried in the *Paradise Graveyard* was required to make a will leaving one-tenth to one-third of one's estate in the name of the Ahmadiyya Movement. If a person had no property or income but otherwise merited burial in the graveyard, he was to be permitted to be buried therein.

In accordance with the wishes and instructions of the Promised Messiah, this special graveyard was established in Qadian.

JOURNEY TO LAHORE AND DEATH

In April 1908, the Promised Messiah travelled to Lahore accompanied by his family. During his stay there he made numerous speeches, met with a succession of visitors and wrote his last book entitled ***Paigham-e Sulah*** or Message of Reconciliation. This book was addressed to Hindus and Muslims to patch up their quarrels and sign a formal pact to tolerate one another and enjoy the benefits of unity and peace. He told the two groups that unwarranted attacks on the scriptures and prophets of other people cause only trouble and that more understanding should be used in religious matters. Even in the presence of differing viewpoints, he said, mutual respect could bring the people closer.

On May 20, 1908, the Promised Messiah received his last revelation in Arabic:

> "It is the time of departure; yes, it is the time of departure and death is near"

Six days later, on May 26, 1908, the Promised Messiah passed away. He was little over 73 years old at the time (equivalent to 75 years by lunar reckoning). His coffin was brought from Lahore to Batala by train and from there his companions carried it on their shoulders to Qadian, a distance of eleven miles. Next day he was buried in the *Bahishti Maqbarah.*

A LIST OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH'S BOOKS

The writings of the Promised Messiah fall into three categories:

1. Books, magazines, and posters which he wrote for the purpose of publication.
2. Letters which he wrote to his relatives, friends or other people.
3. Addresses and speeches which he made in formal or informal gatherings.

The authenticity of Promised Messiah's various "writings" should be considered in the order given above. Below is given a list of the

books of Promised Messiah, which belong to category-1. The books marked with an asterisk are entirely or partly in Arabic.

No	Name of the Book	Title in English	Year Publ.
1.	Brahin-e Ahmadiyya	Proofs of Ahmadiyyat, Vols. 1, 2	1880
		Vol. 3	1882
		Vol. 4	1884
2.	Purani Tahrirain	Old Writings (1879)	1899
3.	Surma Chashm Arya	Collyrium for Aryas' Eyes	1886
4.	Shahna-e Haq	Battalion of Truth	1887
5.	Sabz Ishtihar	Green Poster	1888
6.	Fatah Islam	Victory of Islam	1891
7.	Tauzih-e Maram	Explanation of Objectives	1891
8.	Izala Auham	Removal of Suspicions	1891
9.	Mubahisa Ludhiana	Ludhiana Debate	1891
10.	Mubahisa Delhi	Delhi Debate	1891
11.	Asmani Faisla	Divine Decision	1892
12.	Nishan-e Asmani	Heavenly Sign	1892
13.	Aaina Kamalat-e Islam*	Mirror of Islam's Excellences	1893
14.	Barakat-ud Dua	The Blessings of Prayer	1893
15.	Hujjatul Islam	Convincing Proof of Islam	1893
16.	Sachai ka Izhar	The Expression of Truth	1893
17.	Jang-e Muqaddas	The Sacred Battle	1893
18.	Shahadatul Quran	Testimony of the Quran	1893
19.	Tohfa-e Baghdad*	A Present to Baghdad	1893
20.	Karamat-us Sadiqeen*	Miracles of the Truthful	1893
21.	Hamamatul Bushra*	Dove of Good News	1894
22.	Nurul Haq*	Light of the Truth	1894
23.	Itmamul Hujja*	The Convincing Proof	1894
24.	Sirrul Khilafah*	The Secret of Khilafat	1894
25.	Anwarul Islam	The Light of Islam	1894
26.	Minan-ur Rahman*	Bounties of the Gracious (written in 1895)	1915
27.	Ziaul Haq	The Light of the Truth	1895

No	Name of the Book	Title in English	Year Publ.
28.	Nurul Quran	The Light of the Quran	1895
29.	Miyarul Mazahib	The Standard of Religions	1895
30.	Arya Dharm	The Arya Religion	1895
31.	Sat Bachan	The True Word	1895
32.	Islami Usool ki Philosophy	Philosophy of Islamic Teaching	1897
33.	Anjam-e Atham*	The End of Atham	1896
34.	Siraj-e Munir	The Bright Lamp	1897
35.	Al-Istifta	The Query	1897
36.	Hujjatullah*	Convincing Proof from God	1897
37.	Tohfa-e Qaisariyya	A Present to the Queen	1897
38.	Sirajuddin Isai ke Char Sawalon ka Jawab	An Answer to Four Questions of Sirajuddin, a Christian	1897
39.	Kitabul Bariyya	The Book of Acquittal	1898
40.	Al-Balagh*	The Conveyance of Message (written in 1897)	1922
41.	Zaruratul Imam	The Need for Imam	1897
42.	Najmul Huda*	The Star of Guidance	1898
43.	Raaz-e Haqiqat	The Secret of the Truth	1898
44.	Kashful Ghita	The Opening of a Curtain	1898
45.	Ayyam-e Sulah	Days of Reconciliation	1899
46.	Haqiqatul Mahdi	The True Nature of Mahdi	1899
47.	Masih Hindustan Main	Jesus in India (written in 1896)	1908
48.	Sitara-e Qaisarah	The Star of the Queen	1899
49.	Tiryaqul Qulub	Elixir for the Hearts	1899
50.	Tohfa-e Ghaznaviyya	A Present for the Ghaznavi (written in 1900)	1902
51.	Roidad-e Jalsa-e Dua	Minutes of the Meeting for Prayer	
52.	Khutba-e Ilhamiyya*	The Revealed Sermon (written in 1900)	1902
53.	Lujjatun Nur*	The Sea of Light (written in 1900)	1910
54.	Government Angrezi aur Jihad	The British Government and Jihad	1900
55.	Tohfa-e Golarhviyya	A Present for the Golarhvi	1902

No	Name of the Book	Title in English	Year Publ.
56.	Arba'in	Forty (Brochures)	1900
57.	Ijazul Masih*	Miracle of the Messiah	1901
58.	Aik Ghalati ka Izala	A Misunderstanding Removed	1901
59.	Dafiul Balaa	The Remover of the Calamity	1902
60.	Al-Huda*	The Guidance	
61.	Nazulul Masih	The Advent of Messiah (written in 1902)	1909
62.	Kashti-e Nuh	The Ark of Noah	1902
63.	Tohfa-tan Nadwah	A Present to the Nadwah	1902
64.	Ijaz-e Ahmadi	The Miracle of Ahmad	1902
65.	Review ber Mubahisa Batalwi wa Chakralwi	Review of the Batalwi and Chakralwi Debates	
66.	Mawahib-ur Rahman*	Gifts of God	1903
67.	Naseem-e Dawat	The Breeze of Invitation	
68.	Sanatan Dharm	Sanatan Dharm	1903
69.	Tazkira-tush Shahadatain	A Narration of two Martyrdoms	1903
70.	Seera-tul Abdal*	The Characteristics of godly People	
71.	Lecture Lahore	The Lahore Lecture	1904
72.	Lecture Sialkot	The Sialkot Lecture	1904
73.	Lecture Ludhiana	The Ludhiana Lecture	1905
74.	Al-Wasiyyat	The Will	1905
75.	Chashma-e Masihi	A Healing Fountain	1906
76.	Tajalliyat-e Ilahiyya	The Divine Manifestations (written in 1906)	1922
77.	Qadian ke Arya aur ham	Aryas of Qadian and We	1907
78.	Brahin-e Ahmadiyya (volume 5)	Proofs of Ahmadiyyat	1905
79.	Haqiqat-ul Wahi*	The Nature of Revelation (written in 1906)	1907
80.	Chashma-e Marifat	The Fountain of God Realization	1908
81.	Paigham-e Sulah	The Message of Reconciliation	1908

THE SYSTEM OF KHILAFAT AFTER THE PROMISED MESSIAH

After the death of the Promised Messiah, a system of Khilafat was instituted in the Ahmadiyya Movement which is similar to the Pious Caliphate that followed the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

In this system of Khilafat, some select members of the community elect a Khalifah by majority vote. The Khalifah is the religious head of the community and directs all affairs of the community in complete accordance with Islamic principles. The Khalifah usually asks for a Bai'at from the community members to re-affirm their allegience to him and to the cause of Islam.

To date, four Khalifahs have led the Ahmadiyya community after the death of the Promised Messiah. The names of these Khalifahs and the periods of their Khilafat, are given below:

1st Khalifah	Maulana Nooruddin	1908-1914
2nd Khalifah	Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad	1914-1965
3rd Khalifah	Mirza Nasir Ahmad	1965-1982
4th Khalifah	Mirza Tahir Ahmad	1982-present

First Khalifah:

MAULANA NOORUDDIN

At the death of the Promised Messiah, a score of the leading members of the Community got together and decided that Maulana Nooruddin should be requested to undertake the responsibility of leading the Community. This request was conveyed to Maulana Nooruddin in a written document signed by these people. After receiving the request, Maulana Nooruddin thought for a while and then said that he will give his reply after prayer.

After performing his Nafl Prayer, he suggested that the members of the Community gather in the garden where he would address them. In his address he told the fellow Ahmadi Muslims that he had never desired to be their leader. He even mentioned the names of

seven other persons who, he said, were more deserving of this honour. Then he told the gathering that if they really insisted, he would be willing to carry this burden. He reminded them, however, that a person who performed the Bai'at, gave up all his freedom in the cause of Islam. Finally, he urged the fellow community members to remain united.

His address was received with great acclamation and all those present performed the Bai'at at the hand of Maulana Nooruddin, who then became the First Successor to the Promised Messiah.

Maulana Nooruddin was born in 1841, at Bhera, a small town in Sargodha District. He traced his ancestry to Umar bin Khattab, the second Caliph of the Holy Prophet Muhammad. He was extremely learned in the Holy Quran and was well known for his knowledge of natural medicine.

In 1865-66, at the age of 25, he travelled to the cities of Mecca and Medinah. He stayed there for nearly one and a half years to acquire religious knowledge.

On his return to Bhera, his home town, he started a religious school where he taught the Holy Quran and the Tradition of the Holy Prophet. Besides, he started practice in the natural medicine. In a short time he became well known for his healing powers and people travelled great distances to be treated at his clinic. His fame came to the notice of the Ruler of Kashmir, who appointed him his court physician in 1867.

Around 1871, at the age of 30, he married Fatima Bibi. This marriage lasted until 1905, when Fatima Bibi passed away. After her death, and on the insistence of the Promised Messiah, he married Sughra Begum.

In 1885, Maulana Nooruddin came across an announcement published by the Promised Messiah. He was so deeply impressed by it that he travelled to Qadian to meet the author. After meeting the Promised Messiah, Maulana Nooruddin was convinced of his truth and became a devout follower of his. When in 1889 the Promised Messiah started accepting the Bai'at, Maulana Nooruddin was the first person to be invited to perform it.

In 1892, the old Ruler of Kashmir died and the new Maharajah terminated his services. Maulana Nooruddin returned to Bhera and started the construction of a large clinic. In the following year he went to Qadian to visit the Promised Messiah. After staying there for a few days, he asked the Promised Messiah for permission to return to Bhera. The Promised Messiah asked him to stay a little longer. After a few days, the Promised Messiah asked him to have his wife come over and join him, which Maulana Nooruddin did. Then a little later, the Promised Messiah asked him to have his books shifted to Qadian. After some time, when Maulana Nooruddin again asked for permission to leave, the Promised Messiah replied:

"Maulvi Sahib, forget about your home town now"

And this Maulana Nooruddin did. From that moment on, even the thought of ever returning to his home town never occurred to him again.

His life at Qadian was completely dedicated to the service of the Ahmadiyya Movement. He spent his time teaching, looking after the poor, treating the sick, proof-reading the Promised Messiah's books and in prayer and devotions.

Some of the important contributions made by Khalifatul Masih-I towards the success of the Ahmadiyya Movement include the founding of Madrassah Ahmadiyya (The Ahmadiyya School), the entrusting of the English translation of the Holy Quran to Maulvi Muhammad Ali and establishment of the first foreign mission in England under the supervision of Chaudhry Fateh Muhammad Siyal.

In January 1914, the health of Khalifatul Masih-I started to decline and continued to do so for the next two months. In early March, he wrote out his will while he was confined to bed. At his instruction, his will was read out to those who were present. Nine days later, on March 13, 1914, Khalifatul Masih-I passed away. At the time of his death he was 73 years old, the same age as the Promised Messiah. He was buried in the Bahishti Maqbarah, by the side of the Promised Messiah.

Maulana Nooruddin was truly an unselfish, unassuming, godly person. His most important characteristic was his unshakeable faith in God and his complete reliance on Him for all his worldly needs. He

was extremely learned and was endowed with great knowledge of the Holy Quran. Consequently, the Promised Messiah had great love and regard for him and expressed it in one of his Persian poems:

> "How good would it be if every one of the community would become Nooruddin".

Second Khalifah:

MIRZA BASHIRUDDIN MAHMOOD AHMAD

At the death of Khalifatul Masih I, Mirza Basiruddin Mahmood Ahmad became the second successor of the Promised Messiah and continued to lead the Community for nearly 52 years.

Birth And Early Childhood

Mirza Bashiruddin was born in Qadian on January 12, 1889 and was the eldest of the five surviving children of the Promised Messiah. Throughout his childhood and early youth, Mirza Bashiruddin suffered from chronic bad health and always fared poorly in his school exams. He could never concentrate on his studies and eventually failed his high school exam. But he took a deep interest in the study of the Holy Quran and learned it from Maulvi Nooruddin who was a great scholar in this field. Later in his life, Mirza Bashiruddin not only studied the religious literature of Islam and other faiths, but also developed an unusual comprehension and mastery of many scientific, economic and political disciplines.

When the Promised Messiah died, Mirza Bashiruddin was only 19 years old. He stood by the body of his holy father and made a pledge in these words:

> "If all others should leave you and I should be left alone, yet I will stand against the whole world and shall not heed any opposition or hostility"

Later events will show that both, his resolve in the face of difficulties and his committment to the cause of Ahmadiyyat, were fulfilled in the most elegant manner.

In 1911, at the age of 22, Mirza Bashiruddin set up an association with the name of ***Majlis Ansarullah,*** under the aucpices of Khalifatul Masih I. This Association of the Helpers of God carried out much useful work in the education of the Community and the upbringing of its youth.

In the year 1912, Mirza Bashiruddin performed the pilgrimage to Mecca. In 1913, he started the publication of a weekly paper called ***Al-Fazal*** which, in the course of time, became a daily newspaper of the Ahmadiyya community.

Election As Khalifah

On March 13, 1914, the First Successor of the Promised Messiah, Maulvi Nooruddin, passed away and the newly born Ahmadiyya Movement was faced with a serious crisis. There was a small faction in the Community, led by Maulvi Muhammad Ali, who wanted to do away with the system of Khilafat. During the Khilafat of Maulvi Nooruddin, these dissenters could not freely give voice to their feelings. At his death, therefore, they openly opposed this system and wanted to defer indefinitely the election of the next Khalifah.

The day after the death of Khalifatul Masih I, his will was read out to some 2,000 Ahmadis who had gathered in the mosque. In this will, Maulvi Nooruddin had suggested that the Community elect a new successor. Maulvi Syed Muhammad Ahsan then stood up and formally proposed the name of Mirza Bashiruddin. After this, the entire congregation shouted, "We second it". Shortly afterwards, all present took the Bai'at or the oath of allegience at the hand of Mirza Bashiruddin, now the Second Khalifah of the Promised Messiah.

Maulvi Muhammad Ali and other dissenters left the congregation without performing the Bai'at. In a few days they even left Qadian and moved to Lahore where they founded their own organization under the name of Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at Islam. The followers of Maulvi Muhammad Ali are commonly referred to as Lahori Ahmadis and differ with the Ahmadiyya Movement on two important points:

1. The Lahori Ahmadis regard the Promised Messiah as only a Reformer and not a Prophet.

2. As a consequence of the above belief, they argue that the Successors of the Promised Messiah should not be called Khalifahs.

Today, the members of the Anjuman at Lahore are only a very small fraction of the Ahmadi Muslims living all over the world.

Main Achievements Of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih II

The 52-year long period of Mirza Bashiruddin's Khilafat gave the Ahmadiyya Movement great stability and visionary direction. The Movement progressed in this period in leaps and bounds. Below, we will read about some of the achievements of the Second Khalifah.

(i) Missionary Work:

Immediately after taking over the office of Khilafat, Mirza Bashiruddin intensified the missionary work of the Ahmadiyya Movement both inside India and abroad. As a result of this effort, a number of new missions were opened in foreign countries, some of which are listed below:

In 1915, first missions were established in Ceylon and Mauritius.

In 1920, the first mission was opened in the United States of America.

In 1921, the first missionary was sent to the West African countries. Since then many missions, schools and hospitals have been established in Ghana, Nigeria, Sierraleone, Gambia, Ivory Coast, and Liberia.

In 1924, the foundation of the Fazal Mosque in London was laid by Khalifatul Masih II himself.

In 1925, the first mission was set up in Indonesia

In 1928, a mission was established in Haifa, Palestine. This place is now in Israel.

In 1934, the first mission in East Africa was opened.

In 1935, a mission was also established in Japan. This mission had

to be closed at the outbreak of the second World War and was re-established in 1969, during the period of Khalifatul Masih III.

In the period 1935-38, missions were opened in many East European countries such as Poland, Hungary, Yugoslavia and Albania. At the outbreak of the Second World War these missions had to be closed. After the war, these countries came under Communist rule and the missions, therefore, could not be revived.

In 1938, a mission was established in Burma.

In 1945, a mission was opened in France but was closed down after a few years.

In 1946, a mission was opened in Aden.

In 1946, the first mission was opened in Spain.

In 1947, a mission was established in Holland and the first mosque was built in The Hague in 1955.

In 1948, the first mission in Switzerland was opened and the mosque at Zurich was built in 1963.

In 1949, a mission was established in Hamburg, West Germany and a mosque was built there in 1957. A second mosque was built in Frankfurt in 1959.

In 1956, the first mission was opened in Copenhagen, Denmark. Since then, missions have been opened in other Scandinavian countries namely, Sweden and Norway.

In 1960, the first South American mission was opened in Guyana.

In 1960, a mission was also established in the Fiji Islands.

(ii) Tahrik-e Jadid:

In November 1934, Khalifatul Masih II initiated the scheme of Tahrik-e Jadid. Under the nineteen demands of this scheme, the Ahmadiyya Community was urged to lead a simple life, to make sacrifices in the cause of Islam and to volunteer their lives for missionary work. The scheme was initially proposed for a period of three years but was made permanent very soon. Under this scheme of

Tahrik-e Jadid today, missionary programmes are being carried out all over the world.

(iii) Waqf-e Jadid:

In 1958, Khalifatul Masih II set up the organization of Waqf-e Jadid to carry out the missionary work inside Pakistan. Under this scheme, volunteers were asked to dedicate their lives to educate the rural population of the country and teach them the true religion of Islam.

(iv) Community Organized By Age Groups:

For the better functioning of the members of the Community, Khalifatul Masih II established various organizations for the different age groups. The male members of the Community were divided into three age groups:

Atfalul Ahmadiyya:	for boys 7 to 15 years old
Khuddamul Ahmadiyya:	for the youth 15 to 40 years old
Ansarullah:	for men above the age of 40

Simiarly, the female members of the Community were organized into:

Nasiratul Ahmadiyya:	for girls 7 to 15 years of age
Lajna Imaillah:	for ladies above the age of 15

These various organizations are very active in Pakistan and abroad. They carry out programmes not only relevant to their own class and age group, but also for the benefit of the community at large. This organization of the Ahmadiyya Community into various classes and age groups, greatly helped in promoting afffectionate ties of mutual brotherhood and sisterhood.

(v) Majlis-e Mushawarat:

In 1922, the Khalifatul Masih II set up a consultative body to advise the Khalifah on many important matters related to finance, budget, education, missionary projects and other affairs of the community. This advisory body formally meets at least once every year.

The number of the delegates to this Majlis keeps growing in response to the growth of the community. Currently, the delegates number more than 500.

(vi) Public Awareness Of Islam:

In the early twentieth century in India, Islam was a much maligned religion and slanderous remarks were frequently made against the character of the Holy Prophet of Islam. To create public awareness of the true teachings of Islam and of the real character of the Prophet Muhammad, Khalifatul Masih II introduced public meetings in which representatives of other religions were invited to give speeches on the life and work of the Holy Prophet. These meetings were very successful in spreading the message of Islam and improving inter-faith relations.

Claim To Be The Promised Son

By 1939, the Ahmadiyya Movement had completed 50 years of its existence and Khalifatul Masih II had completed 25 years of his Khilafat. The Movement had made remarkable advances during the Kilafat of Mirza Bashiruddin and the feeling was growing among the members of the Community that he, indeed, was the Promised Son regarding whom the Promised Messiah had made the famous prophecy. But Mirza Bashiruddin had refrained from making any public claim so far.

Finally, on January 28, 1944, Khalifatul Msih II related a dream of his in the Friday sermon. According to this dream it was made clear to him that he was indeed the Promised Son.

Later on, he called special meetings of the Community to re-affirm this fact. These meetings were held in the following places:

Hoshiarpur:	on February 20, 1944
Lahore:	on March 12, 1944
Ludhiana:	on March 23, 1944
Delhi:	on April 16, 1944

In all these meetings he told the public that through various

dreams, visions and revelations, God had made it clear to him that the prophecy regarding the Promised Son was fulfilled in his own person.

Migration To Pakistan

On the creation of Pakistan, in August 1947, many of the Muslims living in India moved to the new Islamic state. Khalifatul Masih II also decided to move the administrative centre of the Ahmadiyya Movement from Qadian to Pakistan. Some 313 Ahmadis stayed behind in Qadian to take care of the founding place of Ahmadiyyat, while the rest moved to the new country.

On September 20, 1948, about a year after moving from Qadian, Khalifatul Masih II laid the foundation of the new centre at Rabwah. At the time of its founding, Rabwah was a waste, desert land with no vegetation and frequent dust storms. Over the past forty years, Rabwah has grown into an exemplary Muslim community complete with schools, colleges, hospital, institutions of religious learning and offices of the Ahmadiyya Movement. Rabwah is also the official residence of the Khalifah.

Attempt On Life

In March 1954, an assassin attacked Khalifatul Masih II with a knife while he was leading the afternoon Prayers in the Mubarak Mosque in Rabwah. He received a deep wound in the neck, which could have been fatal had it gone a little deeper. Khalifatul Masih was 65 years old at the time.

Although the wound healed in due course, it shattered his nerves leading to a severe nervous fatigue a year later. After recovering somewhat, he travelled to Europe for medical treatment on the advice of his doctors. After staying there for about six months, he returned to Rabwah.

After his return from Europe, he undertook the writing of the Shorter Commentary of the Holy Quran, in the Urdu language. The strain from this work plus other demands of his office, led to strong nervous fatigue in 1958. From then on, his condition gradually

worsened till, on November 8, 1965, Khalifatul Masih II passed away. He was 77 years old at the time of his death. Next day he was buried in the Bahishti Maqbarah at Rabwah.

The Writings Of Khalifatul Masih II

Some of the important writings of Khalifatul Masih II are listed below:

Tafsir-e Kabir	The Larger Commentary of the Holy Quran
Tafsir-e Saghir	The Shorter Commentary of the Holy Quran
Dawatul Amir	Invitation to the Chief (published in English under the title of *Invitation to Ahmadiyyat*)
Tohfatul Maluk	A Present for the Kings
Haqiqatul Nabuwwat	The Nature of Prophethood
Sayr-e Ruhani	The Spiritual Stroll
Inqilab-e Haqiqi	The True Revolution
Hindustan ke Siyasi Mas'ala ka hal	The Solution to the Political Problem of India
Paigham-e Ahmadiyyat	The Message of Ahmadiyyat
Fazail al-Quran	The Excellences of the Quran
Hasti Bari Taala	The Existence of God
Malaikat Allah	The Angels of God
Islam ka Iqtisadi Nizam	The Economic System of Islam

Introduction to the Study of the Holy Quran

Third Khalifah:

MIRZA NASIR AHMAD

With the death of Khalifatul Masih II, the Ahmadiyya Community was once again faced with the task of electing the new khalifah. The wounds of dissent, which the community had incurred after the death of the first Khalifah, had healed but their memory was still fresh. To safeguard against a similar dispute arising again, Khalifatul Masih II

had established an Electoral College for the election of the Khalifah. The members of this college numbered about one hundred and fifty and included, among others, the Amirs of various circles in Pakistan, heads of the various central organizations and senior missionaries of the Movement.

At the death of Khalifatul Masih II, the Electoral College met in the Mubarak Mosque in Rabwah. When the votes were cast, Mirza Nasir Ahmad, the eldest son of the departed Khalifah, was elected by an overwhelming majority. Immediately, some five thousand Ahmadis waiting outside the mosque for the results, performed the Bai'at at the hand of Khalifatul Masih III. He was 56 years old at the time.

Birth And Early Life:

Mirza Nasir Ahmad was born on November 16, 1909 and, by the young age of 13, had committed the entire Holy Quran to memory. In 1934, at the age of 25, he graduated from Government College, Lahore, with honours in Arabic. The same year he got married and soon afterwards proceeded to Oxford University for higher education. After obtaining his degree from Oxford, he returned to Qadian in 1938. From that day till he became the Khalifah in 1965, Mirza Nasir Ahmad held a number of important positions in the Ahmadiyya organization:

1938-1939	Professor, Jamia Ahmadiyya, Qadian
1939-1944	Principal, Jamia Ahmadiyya, Qadian
1939-1949	Sadar, Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya
1949-1954	Naib Sadar, Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya
1944-1965	Principal, Talimul Islam College
1954-1965	Sadar, Majlis Ansarullah
1955-1965	President, Sadar Anjuman Ahmadiyya
1965-1982	Khalifatul Masih III.

Main Achievements Of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III

As Khalifatul Masih III, Mirza Nasir Ahmad led the Community for nearly 17 years and contributed a great deal towards the progress of

the Movement in the missionary work at home and abroad. Some of the noteworthy achievements of Khalifatul Masih III are mentioned below:

(I) Fazl-e Umar Foundation

In 1965, Khalifatul Masih III established the Fazl-e Umar Foundation in the memory of Khalifatul Masih II, who was named Fazl-e Umar in one of the revelations of the Promised Messiah. The purpose of this foundation was to carry on all the works in which the departed Khalifah had taken particular interest. An appeal was made to the community to raise 2.5 million rupees as the capital of the foundation. The community participated in this venture overwhelmingly and the actual contributions far exceeded the initial target which was then raised to 5.2 million rupees. The main objectives of the foundation are:

- to assist in research work
- to assist in new missionary venture
- to assist in new educational effort
- to assist in economic welfare

(ii) Khilafat Library:

On October 3, 1971, the Khalifatul Masih III inaugurated the Khilafat Library in Rabwah. This library can accommodate 50,000 books and has ample space for readers, research scholars and administrative work.

(iii) Nusrat Jehan Scheme:

After touring the West African countries in 1970, Khalifatul Masih III announced a scheme to expand the activities of the Movement in West Africa through the establishment of a number of schools and hospitals.

The new scheme was named Nusrat Jehan Scheme and Khalifatul Masih III appealed to the Community to raise 100,000 pounds sterling over the next three years. Furthermore, he appealed to the Ahmadi

teachers and doctors to volunteer themselves for service in these African countries.

The response of the community in making financial donations as well as volunteering their services was overwhelming. Very soon, schools and hospitals started to be established in Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, Gambia and Sierra Leone. The results of this scheme have been most gratifying. The effort of the Movement has not only provided educational and medical services in remote regions which were completely devoid of any such facility, but, more importantly, the close contact of Ahmadi doctors and other workers with the local population has forged strong bonds of international brotherhood.

(iv) Waqf Aarzi:

Waqf Aarzi means the temporary donation of one's time. Khalifatul Masih III instituted this scheme early in his Khilafat, under which Ahmadi Muslims would spend at least two weeks of their time at a designated place in the country and teach the local community the Holy Quran and explain to them the true religion of Islam.

(v) Centenary Jubilee:

At the Annual Gathering held in Rabwah in December 1973, Khalifatul Masih III announced that the Ahmadiyya Movement will celebrate its 100th anniversary on March 23, 1989. The celebrations will start on March 23 and will continue throughout the year, finishing at the Annual Gathering of the same year.

The Centenary Jubilee will not only mark the 100 year existence of the Ahmadiyya Movement, but also the culmination of an intensive programme undertaken in the intervening years which would involve:

- the establishment of additional missions abroad
- the translation of the Holy Quran in French, Russian, Italian, Spanish, Chinese and Yugoslavian languages
- the publication of Islamic literature in at least 100 languages of the world

- the installation of printing presses in Pakistan and abroad
- the establishment of a broadcasting system in a foreign country.

Khalifatul Masih III appealed to the Community to pledge 25 million rupees to finance the various projects envisaged under this centenary celebration scheme.

Persecution Of Ahmadis In Pakistan

Like the Muslims of the early days of Islam, Ahmadis have had their share of discrimination and persecution. Although the opposition of the Ahmadiyya Movement by the mullahs and orthodox Islamic clergy dates back to the days of the Promised Messiah, organized discrimination and persecution has greatly intensified since the creation of Pakistan.

The first major outbreak of severe violence against the Ahmadis occurred in 1953, during the Khilafat of Mirza Bashiruddin, Khalifatul Masih II. At that time, the government of Pakistan had to impose Martial Law within the country to curb the rioting and looting against the Ahmadis.

The second wave of such anti-Ahmadiyya activities started in 1974 and was backed by the government of Prime Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto. During this period, many Ahmadi homes were looted and burned, the community was boycotted, many Ahmadis in the higher echelons of the government and the armed forces were retired, and a number of the community members were put to death.

These outrages against the Ahmadiyya Movement culminated in a resolution of the National Assembly of Pakistan, on September 7, 1974, which declared the Ahmadies as non-Muslims under the law and constitution of the country.

Throughout these extremely trying circumstances, the Ahmadiyya Community displayed a remarkable sense of restraint and self control and bore these outrages with great patience and forbearance.

Prime Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, who used to take great pride and credit for declaring the Ahmadis non-Muslims, came to a sorry end. On July 5, 1977, less than three years after the resolution of the

National Assembly, he was removed from office by the Martial Law regime of General Ziaul Haq. Bhutto was then imprisoned and charged for the abetment of the murder of a political opponent in 1974. He was convicted on March 18, 1978 and hanged on April 4, 1979, despite many pleas for clemency by many countries. Bhutto's age at the time was 51 years and 3 months. This incident marked the fulfillment of the Promised Messiah's revelation and prophecy:

"He is a dog and he will die on the numeric value of dog"

In this revelation the Promised Messiah was given the intimation that the value of the letters in the word "dog" points to the age of the person. The Arabic word used for dog in his revelation was "klb" which, under the letter valuing system, amounts to the number 52. In explanation of this revelation the Promised Messiah wrote in his book *Azalah Auham:*

> "He is a dog and he will die on the numeric value of the letters in dog; which amount to fifty-two. This means that his age will not axceed fifty-two years and that he will die within the course of his fifty second year"

This prophecy of the Promised Messiah made in 1891, was fulfilled word for word, eighty-eight years later.

Illness And Death

In June 1982, Khalifatul Masih III ws taken ill while visiting Islamabad. The illness proved fatal and on June 9, 1982, Khalifatul Masih III passed away. His body was taken to Rabwah where, on the following day, he was buried in the Bahishti Maqbarah.

Fourth Khalifah:

MIRZA TAHIR AHMAD

After the death of the Khalifatul Masih III, the Electoral College convened in the Mubarak Mosque in Rabwah to elect the new Khalifah. After the votes were cast, Mirza Tahir Ahmad, the son of Mirza Bashiruddin and the grandson of the Promised Messiah, was

elected by an overwhelming majority as the Fourth Khalifah of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam.

Mirza Tahir Ahmad was born in Qadian on December 18, 1928. He obtained his high school education at Talimul Islam High School, Qadian, and his early college education at Government College, Lahore. In 1949, he enrolled in the Jamia Ahmadiyya missionary college at Rabwah and successfully completed his ***Shahid*** examination in 1953.

In 1955, he went to England where he undertook some higher studies and also performed missionary services. After staying in Europe for two and a half years, he returned to Rabwah.

Since 1958, Mirza Tahir Ahmad has held a number of important positions in the organization of the Movement, some of which are listed below:

1958-	Nazim Irshad, Waqf-e Jadid
1960-1966	Naib Sadar, Khuddamul Ahmadiyya
1961-	Member, Iftaa Committee
1966-1969	Sadar, Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya
1976-	Director, Fazl-e Umar Foundation
1974	Member of the representative delegation to the Pakistan National Assembly
1979-1982	Sadar, Majlis Ansarullah
1982	Elected Khalifatul Masih IV

The Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam continued its rapid progress under the leadership and guidance of its fourth Khalifah. New missions and mosques were opened, members of the Community were urged to call people unto God and to make additional sacrifices of their times and their wealths. In the face of this new zeal that started to pervade the Community, the government and the Muslim clergy in Pakistan mounted another wave of opposition, restrictions and persecutions. This culminated in the formation of a Government ordinance which severely restricted the freedom of religious expression on the part of the Ahmadi Muslims in Pakistan.

In view of the nature of these restrictions, Mirza Tahir Ahmad, the

Fourth Khalifah of the Promised Messiah, decided to leave Pakistan and came to London, England, in April 1984. He undertook this migration to safeguard the institution of Khilafat, which was increasingly coming under great danger in Pakistan, and to continue to lead the Community, an act which was being denied in the home country.

The Khilafat of Mirza Tahir Ahmad is facing a new level of national and international opposition and persecution. But, despite all these setbacks, the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam continues to make significant progress in the areas of missionary work, translations of the Holy Quran, publishing of Islamic literature and increasing spiritual fervour among its members.

SECTION 6

COMPARATIVE RELIGIONS

A SURVEY OF MAJOR FAITHS

INTRODUCTION

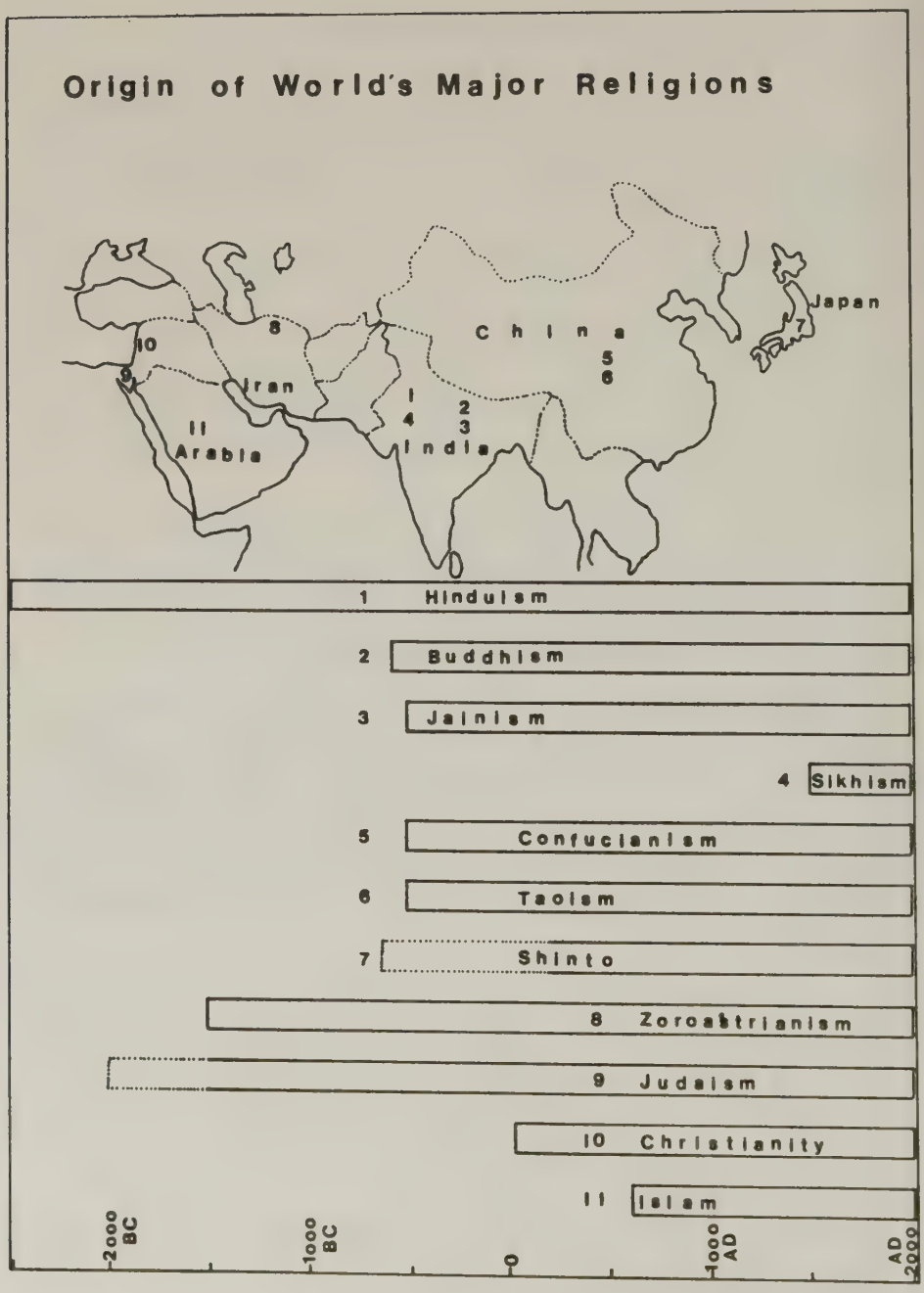
To fully appreciate the religion of Islam and to be able to explain its excellences to other people, Muslims must learn something about the beliefs, traditions and history of the world's other major faiths.

An important aspect of modern research in the area of religion has been the application of comparative methods of inquiry. Under this system of investigation, one compares the beliefs, modes of worship, ethical and moral codes, social directives, and the philosophies of two different religions. Since most of us are quite familiar with at least one religion, we can appreciate the concepts and tenets of another religion when compared with our own.

But, unfortunately, a study of comparative religions frequently deteriorates into a study of competitive religions. In most such studies the student learns little about the other faith except how rediculous it is. And this is not the purpose of true learning.

Ahmadi Muslims believe that at the root of all major religions is the process of revelation. It is through this process that spiritual knowledge and wisdom is given to man by God. The knowledge thus received is considered to be the most authentic and truest form of learning. The founders of all mojor religions have either explicitly claimed to have received revelation, or their lives clearly demonstrate this fact.

While there are many aspects of earlier religions which became outdated with time due to man's continuing progress in the fields of social behaviour, technological achievements and religious philosophy, there are certain wisdoms expressed in all religions which are "everlasting" and of universal appeal. These gems of wisdom have an uncanny ability to survive the vagaries of time and could be unearthed even in the ruins of some of the oldest faiths on earth. For this reason, selected words of wisdom taken from their sacred books have been included under each religion.


Origin of World's Major Religions
China
Japan
Iran
Arabia
India
1 Hinduism
2 Buddhism
3 Jainism
4 Sikhism
5 Confucianism
6 Taoism
7 Shinto
8 Zoroastrianism
9 Judaism
10 Christianity
11 Islam
2000 BC
1000 BC
0
1000 AD
AD 2000

CLASSIFICATION OF RELIGIONS

As we mentioned at the beginning of this book, there are about ten major religions in the world. In alphabetical order, these are: Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Judaism, Shinto, Taoism and Zoroastrianism. Although Sikhism is not considered a mojor religion or a revealed faith, it is included in this section for the benefit of the reader.

To simplify the study of comparative religions, the scholars classify these faiths into various categories based on certain criteria. For example, on the basis of geographic origin, the world's major religions may be classified as follows:

Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism, which originated inIndia

Confucianism and Taoism, which originated in China

Shinto, which originated in Japan

Zoroastrianism, which originated in Iran

Judaism, Christianity and Islam, which originated in the Near East.

Another criterion that can be used in classifying these religions is their ethnic aspect. Some religions have appeal to their own people and are, therefore, called ethnic. Preaching to outsiders and conversions in these ethnic faiths have always been uncommon. Other faiths claim to be of more universal appeal, have been vigorous in missionary work and have actively sought conversions. Following is the division of the world's major religions into these two classes:

Ethnic Religions	Missionary Religions
Hinduism	Buddhism
Jainism	Christianity
Confucianism	Islam
Taoism	
Shinto	
Zoroastrianism	
Judaism	

Another classification of these religions is based on the relative importance of "prophecy" in these faiths. Religions in which prophecy has been demonstrated to have played an important role are called "Religions of Prophecy" while all other faiths are called "Religions of Wisdom". On this basis, the major religions could be divided into:

Religions of Prophecy	Religions of Wisdom
Zoroastrianism	Hinduism
Judaism	Buddhism
Christianity	Jainism
Islam	Confucianism
	Taoism
	Shinto

Muslims believe that God sent His messengers to all the nations in the world. For this reason, Muslims should carry out any comparative religious study with due objectivity and proper consideration for the convictions of others. Muslims should realize that for many people a religion is not simply a rational set of beliefs and worships but also a way of life in which loyalty to one's country, ancestors, traditions and culture, all play an important role. Muslims, therefore, should treat the religions of other people with great respect and strongly refrain from ridiculing them in any way.

Now, one by one, we will study the major religions of the world. We will study their essential beliefs, modes of worship and philosophy of life, and will frequently quote words of wisdom from their sacred Scriptures. In each case, brief comparisions will be made with the religion of Islam. The treatment of the world's major religions in this section is intended to be informative and educational rather than competitive and contentious. It is hoped that the student will benefit from this approach.

HINDUISM

Some Basic Facts:

Name — The word "Hindu" is the Persian word for Indus, the river along which the ancient Indus Valley civilization flourished. Hindus themslves prefer to speak of their religion as ***Sanatan Dharm*** or the True Teachings.

Founder — Hinduism has no known founder. Also, the followers of Hinduism do not recognize any "prophets" in their religious tradition. Non-Hindu scholars believe that personages such as Krishna and Rama Chandra were Hindu prophets.

Place of Origin — India

Sacred Books — The Hindu sacred literature is divided into two kinds: the ***Sruti*** or revealed and ***Smrti*** or remembered.

The Sruti or revealed literature

Rig Veda	lyric hymns to various deities
Sama Veda	hymns in reference to the Soma sacrifice
Yajur Veda	sacrificial prayers
Atharva Veda	incantations
Brahmanas	commentaries of the Vedas and concerned with ritual and prayer
Upanishads	philosophical and speculative texts dealing with Brahman and Aatman

Smrti or remembered literature

Mahabharata	epic literature of the third century BC. Ascribed to the sage Vyasa. The hero of the epic is the avatar Krishna. This epic contains the famous Bhagvad-Gita or the Song of the Lord.
Ramayana	epic literature of the second century BC and ascribed to the saint Valmiki. It narrates the life of the avatar Rama.

	Puranas	devotional texts dealing with religious practices, mythology and cosmogony.
Sacred Places	City of Varanisi or Banaras, on the Ganges. Allahbad, where Ganges and Jamna meet. Vrindaban.	
Festivals	Holi	a spring festival associated with Krishna
	Divali	the Feast of Lights, an autumn festival
	Dasera	a ten day festival celebrating Rama's battle against Ravana

Introduction

The word Hinduism covers a large number of indigenous faiths that developed and flourished in the Indian subcontinent, over the past four thousand years. On the lowest level, these faiths include the most primitive type of animism and, on the highest level, a rarefied monism.

The Hindu religion is very old, diverse, and evolved considerably over the first 1,000 to 1,500 years of its existence. Due to its great antiquity, a great deal of mythology got incorporated with the wisdom and philosophical speculation.

The history of the Hindu religion dates back to the arrival of the Indo-Aryans in India around 1500 BC. The word "Aryan" is a linguistic term indicating a speech group of Indo-European origin and is not an ethnic term. The arrival of the Indo-Aryans coincided with the decline of the Indus Valley civilization which had existed in India since 3000 BC. The Indo-Aryans came from the region of the Caspian Sea and the southern Russian steppes. They entered north India through the passes in the Hindu Kush mountains.

The Indo-Aryans brought many beliefs with them. Over the centuries the beliefs of the Aryans mixed with those of the local Dravidian people giving rise to what is known today as Hinduism.

Essential Beliefs Of Hinduism

Without any attempt to rank them in their order of importance, following are the essential Hindu beliefs:

1. The Hindu Triad

The central belief of Hinduism is that there is One Universal Spirit called Brahman which has no beginning or end. In Bhagvad-Gita, the Song of the Lord, we find the following description of the Supreme Spirit:

> "I am He by Whom the worlds were created and shall be dissolved ... There is nothing higher than Me... The whole world is pervaded by Me, yet My form is not seen. All living things have their being in Me, yet I am not limited by them... I, the Supreme Self, am the cause and upholder of all.. Under My guidance, Nature produces all things movable and immovable ... I am the Father of the universe and its Mother. I am its Nourisher. I am the Knowable and the Pure.... I am the Goal, the Sustainer, the Lord, the Witness, the Home, the Shelter, the Lover and the Origin. I am Life and Death; I am the Fountain and the Seed Imperishable.
>
> "I am the Source of all; from Me everthing flows. The Supreme Spirit, the Eternal Home, the Holiest of the Holy, the Eternal Divine Self, The Primal God, the Unborn and the Omnipresent. The Source and Master of all beings, the Lord of Lords, the Ruler of the universe.
>
> "Could a thousand suns blaze forth together it would be but a faint reflection of the radiance of the Lord-God. He is the Light of lights, beyond the reach of darkness; the Wisdom, the only thing that is worth knowing.
>
> "The aspects of My divine life are endless. Whatever is glorious, excellent, beautiful and mighty, be assured that it comes from a fragment of My splendour"

In the Hindu religious philosophy, Brahman, the Supreme Spirit, has three main attributes or manifestations which are identified as:

- Brahma, the Creator
- Vishnu, the Preserver
- Shiva, the Destroyer

Because of these three main attributes or forms of Brahman, He is also called ***Trimurti*** or the Three-in-One God. Besides *Brahma,*

Vishnu and *Shiva,* there are many other attributes of Brahman which are all symbolized in the Hindu religion as "gods".

Brahman is the Absolute, impersonal World Soul Who cannot be known without its various manifestations which then become the personal deities. Different groups of Hindus worship Brahma or Vishnu or Shiva as their personal god.

Hindus believe that at the end of each cycle of creation, called a "Day of Brahma", Shiva destroys the old world, Brahma creates a new one and Vishnu appears on earth in various forms or incarnations called "avatars".

With this unusual belief in the Brahman on one hand and in its various manifestations on the other, Hinduism is at once a monotheism and a polytheism.

2. Avatars

According to Hindu belief there are ten avatars or incarnations of Vishnu:

1. Matsya, the fish
2. Kurma, the tortoise
3. Varaha, the boar
4. Nara-Simha, the man-lion
5. Vamana, the dwarf
6. Parusha-Rama, Rama with an axe
7. Rama-Chandra, the hero of the Ramayana epic
8. Krishna, the main character in the Bhagvad-Gita
9. Buddha, the founder of Buddhism
10. Kalki, the tenth avatar who is yet to come

3. World is Eternal

Hindus believe that the world is part of a beginningless and endless process which follows fixed cycles known as the Days of Brahma. Each day of the Brahma lasts for four and a half billion years.

4. The Soul is Eternal

Hindus believe that the souls have existed from time immemorial and are not necessarily created by Brahma.

5. The Law of Dharma

Very simply, this is the Law of Moral Order or right conduct. According to this law each person has his own dharma which depends upon his own race, caste or family. Although dharmas of various people may be different according to their station in society, they all lead to the same objective: reunion with Brahman, the World Soul.

6. The Caste System

Hinduism is the only religion in the world that believes in a caste system. Under this system people are assigned certain specific functions and duties in the society. The four castes recognized under this system. are:

Brahmins	the priests, philosophers and holy people dedicated to the study of the sacred books. Brahmins belong to the highest caste.
Kshatriyas	engage in military and governmental activities. They represent the upper middle class.
Vaisyas	the tradesmen, merchants, farmers and industrialists
Shudras	these carry out menial jobs in the society and their essential purpose is to serve the other three castes.

7. Samsara

Samsara is the endless cycle of birth and rebirth through which each soul goes until it attains liberation. This concept of reincarnation applies to the individual as well as the universe.

8. The Law of Karma

According to this law every action produces its inevitable result so that the conditions of each rebirth are determined by the acts performed during the previous life. Under this law, "From good must come good; and from evil, evil".

9. Moksha or Salvation

Salvation is achieved in Hinduism when the soul is finally released from its continuous process of birth and rebirth and becomes one with Brahman, the World Soul.

Hindu Acts Of Worship

In Hinduism, there are many ways and methods to achieve religious objectives. There is the way of penance and the way of sacrifice. There are the ways of meditation, of devotion, of renunciation and of religious acts.

There are no specific practices or creeds that are held essential in Hinduism and there are many forms of religious worship in this faith:

1. Sandhya

These are devotional rituals that are performed three times a day: at dawn, at midday and in the evening. These rituals begin by bathing oneself in the morning and include meditation, making of offerings and uttering of prayers.

2. Puja

Puja, which literally means worship, involves the paying of respect to the god. The Hindu gods are invariably in the form of idols. These idols are usually kept in the temple but may also be kept at home. The idol or statue of the god is the symbol of divine presence to the Hindus. The Hindu worship is seldom congregational and is largely individual. Certain rituals are followed during the puja both at home and in the temple.

3. Katha

Katha is the communal worship and involves recitations from the Scriptures.

4. Yogas

Yoga is the general name for certain disciplines which, the Hindus believe, should be followed to achieve the state of "nirvana" or enlightenment. These disciplines are extremely ancient and are considered necessary to gain complete control of one's emotions and morals. It is through the yogas that the Hindus try to identify with the Brahman.

5. Samskaras

In the Hindu religion certain rituals are performed which relate to the various stages of one's life. These rituals include:

name giving ceremony
shaving of the child's head
initiation into the caste
marriage ceremony
funeral sacrament
post-cremation ceremonies

6. Pilgrimage

The pilgrimages are a very important aspect of Hindu religion. There are local, regional and national pilgrimage sites across India. The objectives of performing these pilgrimages are manyfold : for salvation, for absolution of sins, for worship, for experiencing the divine, for obtaining relief from illness or for receiving some other specific blessings.

The Philosophy Of Life In Hinduism

risk of over-simplification, we could reduce the Hindu philosophy of life to four basic objectives:

(i) Dharma: The acquisition of religious knowledge through right conduct and right living

(ii) Artha: The lawful making of wealth

(iii) Karma: The satisfaction of human needs and desires covering the entire lifetime

(iv) Moksha: The quest for liberation and salvation.

Wisdom Of Hinduism

Below is a sampling of some of the wisdom of Hinduism taken from its sacred books:

- "The end and beginnings of beings are unknown. We see only the intervening forms. Then what cause is there for grief"
- "Sacrifice is the noblest form of action"
- "All action originates in the Supreme Being"

- "Neither in this world, nor elsewhere, is there any happiness in store for the one who always doubts"
- "In sorrows not dejected, in joys not over joyed; outside the stress of passion, fear and anger, steadfastly calm in lofty contemplation; such a one is the wise man"
- "Be not overglad attaining joy, and be not oversad encountering grief"
- "That man alone is wise who remains master of himself"
- "Do your earthly duty free from desire, and you shall well perform your heavenly purpose"
- "If you were the worst of all wrong-doers, the ship of truth would bear you safe across the sea of your transgression"
- "Four sorts of mortals know Me; he who weeps, the man who desires to know, he who toils to help, and he who is sure about Me"
- "Whoever offers Me in faith and love a leaf, a flower, a fruit, or water poured froth, that offering made lovingly with pious will, I accept"
- "Those who worship Me with love, I love; they are in Me and I in them"
- "Be certain that none can perish, trusting Me"
- "Passion binds by toilsome strain; but ignorance, which shuts the beams of wisdom, binds the soul to sloth"
- "The doors of hell are threefold, through which men to ruin pass: the door of lust, the door of wrath, and the door of avarice"

- "The faith of each believer conforms itself to what he truly is"
- "Religion shown in acts of proud display is rash and vain"

Comparative Study

Below, we will try to compare the various beliefs and acts of worship of Hinduism with their counterparts in Islam.

(i) Concept of God

Hinduism, with its belief in One Supreme God called Brahman, is basically a monotheistic religion. But the symoblization of the various attributes of Brahman into different deities, turns this fundamental monotheism into a kind of polytheism. Furthermore, the concept of One God is not central to Hinduism as it is with the religion of Islam. In Islam, God is One and no manifestations of God exist in any form.

(ii) Inequality of people

With its institutionalized caste system, Hinduism advocates a strong inequality among people. This caste system is unique to this religion and nothing similar to it can be found in the other major religions of the world. It is conceivable that the caste system originated in ancient India essentially to bring certain order to the society and to allocate different duties to the people. With time, this social order could have become ingrained in the Hindu society and eventually became a source of considerable sorrow to the people in the lower castes.

(iii) Reincarnation

The Hindu philosophy of reincarnation is obviously based on intellectual speculation regarding the nature of death and what happens to the soul afterwards. Belief in reincarnation also exists in two other faiths of Indian origin: Buddhism and Jainism. In Islam, the death in this life leads to resurrection on the Day of Judgment and then an everlasting life afterwards in a spiritual state.

(iv) Salvation

Because of its belief in reincarnation, Hindu concept of salvation is concerned with release from this endless cycle of births and rebirths. In Islam the concept of salvation relates to the receiving of God's pleasure and nearness on the Day of Judgment.

(v) The Worshiping of Idols

Although the Hindus worship idols, they do not believe that the statues themselves have any powers. To them the idols are mere

representations of gods and help to create the proper mood for prayer. Other religions, such as Judaism, Zoroastrianism and Islam, consider this representation of divine existence into various statues, a rather primitive action and attribute it to the great antiquity of this religion. In Islam, all worship is performed to the One Invisible God and no representations of any nature are permitted.

(vi) The Hindu Sacred Books

The Hindus perhaps have the most extensive sacred literature of any religion in the world. But, because of their great antiquity, it is difficult to assign the various books to their original authors. Also, much of the sacred texts relate to intellectual speculation, a field that is continually challenged by man's increasing knowledge.

How much of this sacred literature is the product of revelation and how much owes to human interpolation, is a question difficult to answer with any certainty. There is great wisdom in the Vedas to elicit the view that they were originally revealed. With the passage of time they could have easily suffered at the human hand, much like the sacred texts of many other religions. As regards authenticity, the Holy Quran is the only sacred book in the world today which has remained unchanged since it was first compiled during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet.

(vii) The Hindu Avatars

The ***avatar*** in Hinduism is perhaps the closest thing to the ***prophet*** in the Near Eastern faiths. Although the Hindus believe that the various avatars such as Rama Chandra and Krishna were manifestations of the god Vishnu, to the outsiders these avatars appear to be sages, saints or prophets who, because of the great reverence by the followers, were elevated to their divine status. Muslims believe that Rama Chandra and Krishna were indeed prophets of God, much like Moses, Jesus and Muhammad.

BUDDHISM

Some Basic Facts:

Name	The religion is named after Gautama Buddha	
Founder	Siddharta Gautama Buddha (560 - 480 BC)	
Place of origin	India	
Sacred Books	Tripitaka	the Three Baskets of Wisdom, accepeted by Mahayana branch
	Pali Canon	accepted by Hinayana or Theravada branch
Sacred Places	There is no one sacred place for all the Buddhists of the world. Pilgrimages are usually carried out in individual countries to local shrines and historic places.	
Festivals	Perahera	a festival held in August
	Wesak (Kason)	a festival in May celebrating Buddha's birth

Introduction

Buddhism was founded in India in the sixth century BC, at a time when the people of India had become disillusioned with the Hindu caste system and certain other Vedic teachings.

The founder of this new faith was Siddharta Gautama who was a Hindu prince living in northern India. At a very young age, he became deeply affected by the great suffering and pain that existed in the world. He left his family, renounced his princely status and went out searching for the answers to these problems. He wandered from place to place in search of wisdom when, suddenly, he received enlightenment. Since that day he has been known as the Buddha or the Enlightened One.

Buddha lived for about eighty years and taught his new-found wisdom all over India. For the next thousand years or so, Buddhism spread very rapidly in India and south-east Asia. In every country, Buddhism adapted itself to the local conditions and absorbed many of the local beliefs and rituals. Over the years, many sects developed in Buddhism, two of which are very important:

Mahayana,	or Greater Vehicle of Salvation, and
Hinayana	(also called Theravada),or Lesser Vehicle of salvation

The Mahayana Buddhism is currently practiced in eastern Asia including China, Japan, Korea and Vietnam. Hinayana Buddhism is dominant in southern Asia including Sri Lanka, Burma, Cambodia, Laos and Thailand. A relatively minor sect, known as Northern Buddhism, flourishes in Tibet, Mongolia and the Himalayas.

Initially, Buddhism started as a reform movement within Hinduism but eventually became an independent religion. Buddhism was the first missionary religion of the world where the followers of Buddha carried this faith to other countries and peoples with a strong sense of universal mission. Buddhism shares a number of beliefs with the traditional Hinduism such as the doctrine of reincarnation and the Law of Karma. The main differences between the two faiths originate from the rejection by Buddhism of the Hindu caste system, of the authenticity of the Vedas, and of the belief that an individual soul must be united with the World Soul or Brahman. To many Hindus, Buddha still remains the ninth avatar or incarnation of their god Vishnu.

Essential Beliefs Of Buddhism

Following are the essential beliefs of Buddhism as the religion exists today:

1. From good must come good, and from evil must come evil (this is the Hindu Law of Karma).
2. Prayers and sacrifices to the gods are useless.
3. The Vedas are not sacred books.
4. The world always was and always will be.
5. Brahma did not create the caste system.
6. The aim of life is not pleasure or happiness but the end of individual existence through the practice of the Ten Perfections.
7. He who attains perfect wisdom enters ***nirvana,*** and is freed from the endless chain of births and rebirths.

In addition to the above, the Buddhists believe in the Four Noble Truths:

According to the First Noble Truth, there are many kinds of sufferings in this world including old age, illness, death, failure, separation, etc.

According to the Second Noble Truth, the cause of all these sufferings is the human desire which grasps for the wrong things.

According to the Third Noble Truth, all human suffering can be dissolved by getting rid of the human desire.

According to the Fourth Noble Truth, the desire can be rid of by following the Eightfold Path.

The Eightfold Path

1. Right Belief
2. Right Resolve
3. Right Speech
4. Right Behaviour
5. Right Occupation
6. Right Effort
7. Right Contemplation
8. Right Concentration

The Buddhist DOs and DON'Ts

Among the extensive codes of Buddhism are the Ten Commandments and the Ten Perfections.

The Buddhist Ten Commandments:

1. Do not destroy life
2. Do not take what is not given to you
3. Do not commit adultery
4. Tell no lies and do not deceive anyone
5. Do not become intoxicated
6. Eat moderately
7. Do not watch dancing or plays nor listen to singing
8. Wear no garlands, perfumes or ornaments
9. Do not sleep in luxurious beds
10. Do not accept any gold or silver.

The Buddhist Ten Perfections:

1. Giving (in charity)
2. Duty (religious and worldly)
3. Renunciation (from worldly pleasure)
4. Insight (and wisdom)
5. Courage
6. Patience
7. Truth
8. Resolution (in all undertakings)
9. Loving-kindness (towards friends and enemies alike)
10. Serenity (towards joy and sorrow).

The Worship In Buddhism

Worship is not considered extremely important in Buddhism and varies a great deal between Mahayana and Hinayana branches. Some forms of Buddhist worship are noted below:

(i) **Relic Worship:** Actual and symbolic relics of Buddha are worshiped by the followers by prostration, chanting and making offerings.

(ii) **Meditation:** Meditation is the main religious activity in which the individual attempts to control his self and tries to achieve nirvana.

(iii) **Paritta:** This involves chanting of discourses from the sacred Pali books. This chanting may be done at special events such as death, illness, danger or when embarking upon a new activity.

Buddhist Philosophy Of Life

Buddha strongly preached his followers to follow what he called the "Middle Way". He told them to avoid both extremes. One extreme is to indulge in the pleasures and comforts of this material world and the other extreme is to starve oneself, go without sleep or inflict self punishment.

In the Buddhist philosophy of life, man can overcome the suffering in this world by controlling his desires and following the Eightfold Path. When man obtains perfect wisdom and masters his emotions

and his self, he gains salvation and is ready for the final reward, that is nirvana.

Nirvana, in the Buddhist religion, is not only the blissful state in which all suffering ceases, but it also marks the release of the soul from the endless cycle of birth and rebirth.

The Wisdom Of Buddhism

Following are some of the sayings taken from the Buddhist sacred book, Tripataka:

- "A man who conquers himself is the greater conqueror than the one who battles against a million men"
- "Hatred is not diminished by hatred, but by love"
- "The evildoer mourns in this world, and he mourns in the next"
- "Few there are among men who arrive at the other shore; most of them run up and down this shore"
- "An evil deed, like freshly drawn milk, does not turn sour at once"
- "The scent of flowers does not travel against the wind; but the fragrance of good people travels even against the wind"
- "Not in the sky, nor in the midst of the sea, nor in the clefts of the mountains, nor in the whole world is there a spot where a man could avoid death"
- "The fool wishes for precedence among the monks, for lordship in the monasteries, for honour among other people"
- "Without knowledge there is no meditation, without meditation there is no knowledge"
- "All created things perish"
- "No suffering befalls the man who calls nothing his own"
- "He whose evil deeds are covered by good deeds brightens up the world, like the moon freed from clouds"
- "No amount of effort can purify a man who has not overcome his doubts"

- "There is no fire like passion; there is no evil like hatred; there is no pain like this body; there is no happiness greater than peace"
- "You yourself must make the effort; the Buddhas are only teachers"

Comparative Study

As we mentioned earlier, Buddhism started essentially as a reform movement within Hinduism. Gradually, however, Buddhism started to diverge away from Hinduism and reverence for Buddha increased so much that he began to be portrayed by his followers as a semidivine and, ultimately, as a celestial being.

Buddhism maintains belief in the process of reincarnation and the Law of Karma, as understood by the Hindus. Buddhism, however, rejects the Hindu caste system and the authenticity of the Vedas.

Buddhism of today places little emphasis on the concept of God. But then Buddhism has changed so much to adapt itself to the local conditions in the various countries, that it is almost impossible to ascertain with any great deal of accuracy what its original teachings used to be in this respect.

Buddhism is at once a philosophy of life and a practical discipline. Although Buddhism lacks a well developed spiritual philosophy, it is an extremely humanistic religion and has found great popularity among the people in the western countries. What people find attractive in this religion is its great tolerance, its high moral and ethical standards, its relatively bloodless history and its concept of nirvana.

JAINISM

Some Basic Facts

Name	Jainism means "Religion of the Conquerors"
Founder	Prince Vardhamana, known to his followers as Mahavira, the Great Hero (540 - 468 BC)
Place of Origin	India
Sacred Books	Siddhanta (of the "sky-clad" Jains) Angas (of the "white-clad" Jains)
Festivals	Pajjasama, a festival held for eight days at the close of the Jain year. Divali, originally a Hindu festival but celebrated by the Jains in honour of Mahavira.

Introduction

The Jain religion was founded by Prince Vardhamana who lived in northern India from 540 to 468 BC. He was a contemporary of Buddha and, like him, was born into a Hindu family and studied Hindu religion in his early years. Prince Vardhamana was given the title of Mahavira by his followers which means the Great Hero. The followers of this religion are called Jains, meaning Conquerors who had conquered their own selves.

While both Buddhism and Jainism rebelled against the Hindu caste system and the authority of the Vedas, they both accepted Hinduism's Law of Karma and the belief in Reincarnation and Nirvana. But at this point the two new faiths parted company. Buddhism followed the "Middle Way" of moderation while Jainism followed the way of self denial and asceticism.

There are only about three million Jains living today, almost all in India. But these followers have retained a degree of influence out of proportion to their numbers and the Jain philosophy has played an important role in the history of Indian religions.

Essential Beliefs of Jainism

The two essential beliefs in Jainism which set this religion apart from traditional Hinduism or contemporary Buddhism, relate to the conquering of one's self and the sanctity of all living things.

1. Conquest of Self

In Jainism, the self can only be conquered by self denial, renunciation of worldly pleasures, asceticism and giving up of all desires and ambitions.

2. Principle of Ahimsa

By far the most important tenet of Jainism is the principle of Ahimsa or "non-injury". The Jains accord great reverence to all living things and killing of any form of life is strictly forbidden.

3. The Law of Karma

Jainism believes in the Hindu Law of Karma that from good must come good and from evil, evil. The Law also determines the conditions of each rebirth according to the acts performed in the previous life.

4. Samsara

Jainism also believes in the Hindu principle of Samsara or the endless cycle of births and rebirths. This process of reincarnation continues till the soul finally attains liberation.

5. Moksha

Moksha or salvation in Jainism can only be achieved by the conquest of one's own self and by practicing the principle of Ahimsa.

The DOs and DON'Ts in Jainism

There are five important commandments in Jainism:

Do not kill or hurt any living thing
Do not steal
Do not lie

Do not covet or desire anything
Do not live an unchaste life. Do not become intoxicated

The Worship In Jain Religion

The Jains worship many Hindu gods and also their own saints. Jains believe that Mahavira was the 24th saint and that twenty-three saints had passed away before him. Jain temples are filled with images of these twenty-four saints called Tirthankaras, who are the object of worship by the followers.

Aside from the temple worship, Jains spend about an hour every day in unbroken meditation in which they try to be at peace with the world and contemplate on spiritual heights. If possible, this meditation is carried out three times a day, in the morning, afternoon and the evening.

The Jains also devote their time to temporary monkish living at least six times a month. The Jains have a well developed ethical system in which gambling, eating of meat, drinking, adultery, hunting, stealing and speaking ill of others, are strongly forbidden.

Similarly the concept of charity is a very important part of the Jain religion and is widely practiced. In fact the religion demands that at least one act of charity be carried out each day. Jains today are very active in promoting public welfare and building schools and hospitals.

Jain Philosophy of Life

The Jains believe in the principle of *Samsara,* the endless cycle of births and rebirths. According to Jains it happens only rarely that a soul is born in the human body. Man, therefore, should use every opportunity to obtain moksha or salvation. The path to achieving salvation lies in acquiring the Three Jewels:

- Right Knowledge
- Right Faith
- Right Conduct

Right knowledge comes through knowing the Jain principles, right faith through believing in them and the right conduct through following them.

The Wisdom Of Jainism

- "All living things hate pain; therefore do not hurt them"
- "No man should seek fame and respect by his austerities"
- "There are three ways of committing sin: by our actions, by authorizing others, and by approval"
- "Knowing the truth one should live up to it"
- "A blind man, though he may carry a light, still does not see"
- "A man should treat all creatures in the world as he himself would like to be treated"
- "He who is carried away by passion will not get very far"

Comparative Study

Jainism, very much like Buddhism, developed as an offshoot of the Hindu religion. It maintained many of the Hindu beliefs such as Samsara, Karma and Nirvana. The only two beliefs that are new to Jainism relate to extreme self denial and the sanctity of life. Basically, both these concepts exist in the other major religions of the world but are not taken to the degree practiced in Jainism. Islam and the other religions also de-emphasize worldly pleasures and comforts but do not go to the extreme of giving them up completely. Similarly, all religions teach sanctity of human life and kindness to animals but do not carry this teaching to such extremes that one is forced to give up ploughing the land for fear of killing the rodents or insects. Although the principle of Ahimsa, as taught by Jainism, is not really practicable, it has highlighted the fact that all living things suffer pain and should not be needlessly hurt.

THE SIKH RELIGION

Some Basic Facts

Name	The word ***Sikh*** means a disciple
Founder	The Sikhs regard Baba Nanak as the founder of their faith. History, however, shows that the Sikh religion in its present form was founded by later successors of Baba Nanak. Baba Nanak lived from 1469 to 1539 AD
Place of Origin	Punjab, north India
Sacred Books	Guru Granth

Introduction

The Sikh movement started in India as a small group of devoted disciples who gathered around the saintly person of Baba Nanak. Baba Nanak was a contemporary of Babar, the first Moghul Emperor of India, and was born in April 1469 AD, in a village called Nankana Sahib, not far from Lahore. Although born in a Hindu family, he was disillusioned by the Hindu caste system, the power of the Brahmin priests, and the custom of "sati" in which the widows were burned on the funeral pyre of their husbands.

There is considerable evidence in historical records that Baba Nanak embraced Islam, used to perform the Islamic rituals and undertook the pilgrimage to Mecca. These records also point to the fact that Baba Nanak did not found any new religion. Over the years his disciples and successors, however, did form a new identity and a religion for themselves.

After the death of Baba Nanak, there came a succession of nine Gurus (teachers) who formalized the teachings of the various Gurus, organized the Sikhs into a proper community and implemented the various social institutions found among the Sikhs today. Below are given the names of the various Sikh Gurus, their periods and the periods of thier guruship

1. Guru Nanak	1469-1539	
2. Guru Angad	1504-1552	(Guru 1539-1552)
3. Guru Amar Das	1479-1574	(Guru 1552-1574)

4. Guru Ram Das	1534-1581	(Guru 1574-1581)
5. Guru Arjan	1563-1606	(Guru 1581-1606)
6. Guru Har Gobind	1595-1644	(Guru 1606-1644)
7. Guru Har Rai	1630-1661	(Guru 1644-1661)
8. Guru Har Krishna	1656-1664	(Guru 1661-1664)
9. Guru Tegh Bahadur	1621-1675	(Guru 1664-1675)
10. Guru Gobind Singh	1666-1708	(Guru 1675-1708)

Excluding the period of Baba Nanak, the period of the nine successors lasted 169 years.

These Gurus served as the spiritual and temporal heads of the Sikh community. Each Guru was nominated by his predecessor on the basis of his spiritual ability and worthiness. But, starting with the Fourth Guru, the office became hereditary in the line of his male descendants. Each of the Gurus contributed something which helped the community:

Guru Nanak taught the Unity and love of God

Guru Amar Das established the "langar" or communal eating facility which helped significantly in fostering the bonds of mutual brotherhood

Guru Ram Das initiated the building of the city of Amritsar

Guru Arjan established a number of other Sikh towns in Punjab and built the now famous Hari Mandir, or the Golden Temple, at Amritsar. It was during the time of this Fifth Guru that confrontations with the Muslims started. Guru Arjan died while in Muslim custody and gave the Sikhs their first martyr.

Guru Har Gobind, Guru Har Rai and Guru Har Krishna —the sixth, seventh and eighth Gurus—did not make any significant contribution to the Sikh religion and spent most of their efforts in militarily organizing the Sikh community.

Guru Tegh Bahadur was the surviving son of Guru Har Gobind. During his period, Moghul King Aurangzeb was actively pursuing the policy of Islamization in India. Guru Tegh Bahadur opposed many of the Emperor's policies. The Guru was imprisoned and later executed and is revered by the Sikhs as a great martyr.

Guru Gobind Singh was the tenth and the last Guru of the Sikhs. He took up the office at the age of nine and for the next 33 years consolidated the military power of the Sikhs, leading them against the Islamic powers with considerable success. In fact most of the visible aspects of the Sikh community today owe their origin to Guru Gobind Singh. He gave them the name of "Khalsa" meaning the Pure. The male members of the community were given the title of ***Singh*** (lion), and the females that of ***Kaur*** (princess). He also introduced the five symbols for the Sikhs known commonly as the five K's. These are:

- Kesh (uncut hair)
- Kangha (comb)
- Kirpan (sword)
- Kara (steel bangle)
- Kach (shorts)

Guru Gobind Singh's four sons were all killed during his lifetime. When the Tenth Guru himself was lying on his deathbed, he told the Sikh community that from then on no more human Gurus will appear and that their sacred scriptures, the Granth, would be their Guru. That is why the Sikhs call their sacred book Guru Granth.

Essential Beliefs Of The Sikh Faith

1. The most important belief of the Sikh religion concerns the Unity of God. God is One, the Creator of all things, existing from beginning and the source of all man's happiness.
2. Man can become one with God only by walking on the path of the Gurus. By sincere worship and meditation, the Sikhs believe, one can experience God.
3. The sacred book, Guru Granth, can lead the followers to find God and salvation. No more religious leaders are necessary after the Granth was declared the Guru of the Sikhs.
4. Salvation results with a love-union with God. Until this union takes place, individuals may go through many reincarnations. This principle of reincarnation is taken from Hinduism.

It should be noted that Guru Granth does not present the Sikh

beliefs in any systematic manner. The Granth emphasizes the stimulating aspects of its teachings on the human heart, to love God.

Worship In The Sikh Religion

The focal point of all Sikh worship is the Guru Granth. In the ***gurdwara,*** the Sikh place of worship, the Sikhs sing hymns from the scriptures and members of the congregation give readings and expositions from the Granth. No weekly holy day is observed by the Sikhs.

Although the Sikhs reject the symbolization of God by idols, the paintings of Baba Nanak are highly revered and displayed prominently in the Gurdwara.

In their homes, the Sikhs recite various ***shabads*** or verses from the Granth. The most important of these is Guru Nanak's Japji which is recited silently by the Sikhs every morning. Below are given some selected verses from this Japji to give the reader some idea of the fundamental beliefs of this religion:

- "There is One God whose name is true, the Creator. Devoid of fear and enmity, Immortal, Unborn, Self-Existent
- "The True One was in the beginning; the True One was in the primal age
- "The True One is now also, O Nanak; the True One also will be
- "The hunger of the hungry for God diminishes not though they obtain the load of the worlds
- "If man should have hundred thousand devices, even one would not assist him in finding God
- "How shall man become true before God? How shall the veil of falsehood be rent?
- "By walking, O Nanak, according to the Will of the Commander as ordained
- "Bodies are produced by His order; His order cannot be described
- "By His order souls are infused into bodies; by His order greatness is obtained
- "By His order men are high or low; by His order they obtain predestined pain or pleasure

- "By His order some obtain their reward; by His order others wander in transmigration
- "All are subject to His order; none escapes from it. He who understands God's order, O Nanak, is never guilty of egoism
- "Who can sing His power? Who has power to sing it?
  "Who can sing His gifts or know His signs?
  "Who can sing His attributes, His greatness, His deeds?
  "Who can sing His knowledge whose study is laborious?
  "Who can sing Him, Who fashions the body and then destroys it?
  "Who can sing Him, Who takes away life and then restores it?
  "Who can sing Him, Who appears to be far, but is actualy so near?
  "Who can sing Him, Who is All-Seeing and Omnipresent?
  "In describing Him there would be no end"

Comparative Study

The Sikhs claim that Baba Nanak founded their faith which, they profess, is distinct from either Hinduism or Islam. Historical records, however, prove that Baba Nanak, who was born and raised in a Hindu family, later accepted Islam. Also, many of the shabads of the Granth are simply Gurmukhi renderings of the Quranic verses. Similarly, the concept of God presented in the Granth is exactly the same as given in the Quran. Many of God's attributes mentioned in the Granth are again translations of the Quranic attributes of God.

It is for this reason that many western scholars of religion do not regard Sikhism as an independent religion but an offshoot of Islam.

The Ahmadis believe, and this belief is borne out by ample historical evidence, that Baba Nanak was a Muslim saint and a mystic who was greatly affected by the general lack of education and awakening in his agrarian community in the Punjab. His teachings were directed essentially at his own people and that is the reason why Sikhism later developed as a strongly ethnic religion.

The beliefs and modes of worship of Sikh religion were greatly influenced by the surrounding Hindu tradition and environment. The principle of reincarnation, prostrating in front of the Granth, and the use of Baba Nanak's portraits in the gurdwara, are a few examples.

CONFUCIANISM

Some Basic Facts

Name — Religion named after Confucius, the founder

Founder — Ch'iu K'ung, who was known to his followers as K'ung-fu-tse (K'ung the Philosopher). This was changed in the western countries to Confucius. Period: 551 - 479 BC.

Place of Origin: China

Sacred Books — The Five K'ings:

- Yi K'ing (The Book of Changes)
- Shu K'ing (The Book of Annals)
- K'ing Shih (The Book of Poetry)
- Li K'ing (The Book of Ceremonies)
- Ch'un Ch'in (The Book of History)

Lu Yu (The Book of Analects). This book contains Confucius' sayings and was compiled after his death.

Introduction

Confucianism is a Chinese religion founded by Confucius who lived from 551 to 479 BC, around the same time that Mahavira and Buddha were founding two new faiths in India. The real name of Confucius was Ch'iu K'ung but his followers used to call him K'ung-fu-tse meaning K'ung the Philosopher. This, over the years, got simplified to Confucius in the western countries.

Although Confucius accepted the traditional concept of God and the Divine Law, his teachings mostly emphasized ethics, wisdom, governmental system, regard for justice and the value of tradition.

Confucius was a great teacher and he travelled throughout China, teaching and preaching his philosophy and his system of ethics. He laid great emphasis on the seeking of knowledge and the need to question anything that was ambiguous, until the ambiguity was removed.

The Teachings Of Confucius

The teachings of Confucius can be condensed into six principles and five virtues. These are given below:

The Six Principles of Confucius

1. Human nature is good and evil is unnatural.
2. Man is free to choose his conduct as he wills.
3. Virtue is its own reward. Doing good for a reward or avoiding evil for fear of punishments, is not virtue.
4. The rule for behaviour is: what you do not want others to do to you, do not do to them.
5. A man has five duties: to his ruler, to his father, to his wife (and she to him), to his elder brother, and to his friend.
6. Man should strive to become a superior man.

Five Constant Virtues taught by Confucius

1. Benevolence, which is to think of other people first
2. Righteousness, which is not to do to others which you would not want them to do to you
3. Propriety, which is to behave with respect and courtesy towards others
4. Wisdom, which is to be guided by knowledge and understanding
5. Sincerity, which is to be sincere, truthful and honest in all your actions

The Wisdom of Confucius

Following are some of the sayings of Confucius which have been selected from the Book of Analects:

- "He who does not recognize the existence of a Divine Law cannot be a superior man"
- "Repay kindness with kindness, and enmity with justice"
- "Men of superior mind first get down to the root of things; then the right course is open to them"
- "To prize the efforts above the prize, that is virtue"
- "Do not wish for speedy results nor trivial advantages"
- "The superior man will be agreeable even when he disagrees; the inferior man will be disagreeable even when he agrees"

- "The superior man seeks what is right, the inferior one what is profitable"
- "A good man is neither liked by everybody nor disliked by everybody. He is liked by all the good people and disliked by the bad"
- "Do not set before others what you yourself do not like"
- "In a good country, people speak out boldly and act boldly'
- "When you have erred, be not afraid to correct yourself"
- "We know so little about life, how can we then know about death"
- "To see what is right and not do it, that is cowardice"
- "Only the supremely wise and the abysmally ignorant do not change"
- "When you know a thing, maintain you know it; when you do not, acknowledge it. This is the characteristic of knowledge"
- "Let there be three men walking together, and in them I will be sure to find my instructors"
- "One should not be greatly concerned at not being in office, but rather about the requirements in one's self for that office"
- "The superior man is slow to promise, but prompt to fulfill"

Comparative Study

The Chinese religions have developed so differently from the Near Eastern or Indian religions that a proper or valid comparison is difficult to make. While most major religions emphasize the spiritual aspects of man's life, Chinese religions emphasize only the moral and ethical aspects.

The moral and ethical teachings of the Chinese religions are quite comprehensive. It is in the area of spiritual philosophy and man's relationship with God that these faiths fall short. The Chinese religions lack the intellectual speculataion of the Indian faiths and the spirituality of the Near Eastern religions. For this reason many Chinese people practice the teachings of Confucianism but try to seek salvation in Buddhism.

TAOISM

Some Basic Facts

Name	The religion derives its name from the Chinese word *Tao* meaning The Way. Note that Taoism is pronounced as ***dowism***
Founder	Lao-tze (604 - 524 BC)
Place of Origin	China
Sacred Books	Tao Teh King
Festivals	Chinese New Year Chiao, the festival of cosmic renewal

Introduction

Very little is known about the life of the founder of Taoism except that he was known to his followers as Lao-tze, meaning the Old Philosopher. Lao-tze was a contemporary of Confucius and about fifty years his senior. There are historical records indicating that the two had met more than once. Lao-tze lived in that golden century of religious awakening when four new religions were being founded in the world: two in India and two in China.

The teachings of Taoism are completely different from Confucianism or from any other major religion. Tao teachings are highly metaphysical and lend themselves to such a variety of interpretation that one doesn't really know for sure what Lao-tze intended them to mean.

The teachings of Lao-tze, as they are available today, lack in theology, social laws and institutions. The religion emphasizes living naturally and ethically but not necessarily spiritually.

Very early in its life, this religion branched into two movements: one purely philosophical and the other, religious. As a philosophy Taoism moved towards naturalism while as a religion it deteriorated into superstitious beliefs and occult practices. The followers of Taoism started worshiping nature gods along with Lao-tze and many other gods borrowed from Buddhism.

Over the years, Buddhism exerted great influence on the development of Taoist beliefs and acts of worship. Since Taoism lacked a

formalized or systematic mode of worship, Buddhism promptly filled this vacuum.

Although Taoism is not a major religious order in China today, it has continued to influence the thinking and ethical standards of the Chinese people who still try to seek mystic and philosophical wonders in the teachings of the Tao sacred book, Tao Teh King.

Most Taoists today worship Buddhist gods, make offerings to their ancestors, and follow many other Buddhist rites and ceremonies. They also believe in spirits both good and bad.

The Wisdom Of Taoism

Following are some of the selected sayings from Tao Teh King, the sacred book of Taoism:

- "Nameless are the origins of all creation"
- "The wise man wears a coarse garment, but carries a jewel in his heart"
- "The way of heaven is impartial; but it favours good men"
- "Absence of desires brings tranquility"
- "A thousand mile journey can be made one step at a time"
- "He who conquers others is strong, he who conquers his own will is mighty"
- "The world is lost to those who try to win it"
- "Everything difficult can be dealt with while it is still easy"
- "In serving Heaven and in ruling men, use moderation"
- "To the good I would be good, and to the bad I would be good"
- "The more prohibitions, the more poverty; the more laws, the more crimes; the more weapons, the more chaos"
- "Sincere words are not fine, fine words are not sincere"
- "The wise reject all extremes"
- "The way of Tao is to recompense injury with kindness"
- "Little faith is put in those who have little faith"
- "The value of an act is judged by its timing"
- "Get rid of your preachers and discard your teachers, and the people will benefit a hundred times"
- "If you trust people not enough, they may trust you not at all"

SHINTO

Some Basic Facts

Name	Shinto is the Chinese rendering of the Japanese word ***Kami-no-Michi*** which means the Way of the gods.	
Founder	There is no specific founder of this religion which is largely based on Japanese traditions and mythology	
Place of Origin	Japan	
Sacred Books	Kojiki	(Records of Anicient Writings), assembeled in 712 AD
	Nihongi	assembeled in 720 AD
Sacred Places	Ise, east of Osaka, main island of Honshu. Izumo, north of Hiroshima, island of Honshu	
Festivals	Gion	festival in Kyoto
	Takayama	festival in the Hida region
	Chichibu	festival in the mountains north-west of Tokyo

Introduction

The Japanese religion Shinto is not considered to be a revealed religion by the scholars and historians. Although some fundamental ideas of this religion date as far back as 600 BC, the religion was organized into a systematic set of beliefs and worships around 350 to 550 AD.

One important reason for the organization of this national religion was to meet the challenge of the two imported religions: Buddhism from Korea and Confucianism from China. Over the years, Shinto and Buddhism intermingeled so much in the Japanese society that today many Japanese would declare themselves to be both, Shintoist and Buddhist. It is very common for a Japanese to have a Shinto wedding and a Buddhist funeral.

In the Japanese mythology, the islands of Japan were created by two gods, Izangi and Izanami, who then descended from heaven to populate them. The first emperor of Japan is said to have descended from these two gods. The roots of the Japanese religion, therefore, lie

in animism — a belief that supernatural forces reside in natural objects such as animals, trees and mountains.

The central concept in the Shinto religion is that of ***Kami.*** Kami is a general term of respect for something holy and awesome. According to the Japanese, spiritual forces may reside in people, animals, trees, mountains or other objects. The Japanese appease to these forces by revering or worshiping these objects and respectfully call them Kami.

In rare cases, a living person may be regarded as a Kami. The Japanese believe that a god may take possession of a person's soul and use him as a medium to speak the words of the god. This is the closest thing to the Shinto concept of a prophet.

The Beliefs Of Shinto

Although the Shinto religion has no revealed commandments, it has a fairly well developed code of ethics and social behaviour. The basic beliefs of the Shinto faith could be summarized in the five tenets given below:

1. To be courageous, loyal and to observe cleanliness
2. That the Japanese race originated from two gods names Izangi and Izanami
3. That life is good
4. That the world reveals itself in beauty
5. That the deeds are more important than arguments

The Shinto DO's and DON'Ts

There are two sects of Shinto which have developed formal decalogues or Ten Commandments.

The ten DO's of the Shinshu Kyo sect are:

1. Worship the great deities of Shinto
2. Pacify your spirit
3. Practice the Way of the gods
4. Revere the divine origin of the state
5. Be loyal to the ruler
6. Be zealous in your duty towards your parents

7. Be kind to others
8. Be diligent in business
9. Be steadfast
10. Cleanse away the rust of your body

The ten DON'Ts of the Shinri Kyo sect are:

1. Do not transgress the will of the gods
2. Do not forget your obligations to the ancestors
3. Do not transgress the decrees of the state
4. Do not forget the great goodness of the gods which removes misfortune and sickness
5. Do not forget that the world is one great family
6. Do not forget the limitations of your own person
7. Do not become angry
8. Do not be lazy in your business
9. Do not cause dishonour to the teachings
10. Do not be carried away by foreign teaching

Worship In The Shinto Religion

Much of Shinto worship is an individual matter. Usually, before undertaking a journey, or an examination, or a new venture, a Shintoist will visit the shrine to appease the gods.

The concept of the shrine is very important in the Shinto religion. In the Japanese language the word for shrine means spiritual dwelling-place of a god. It is very common for a shrine to enshrine a different deity. The deities of Shinto are not supernatural beings or gods, but rather the spiritualization of ordinary natural objects.

The shrines are generally located at places of natural beauty such as mountain tops. Inside the shrine is a large trough of clean water for the worshiper to perform ablution. The worshiper then performs a short prayer in the worship hall of the shrine.

In the Shinto religion, ancestor worship has an important place. In Shinto philosophy, man can only exist in this world by receiving the blood of countless ages of ancestors. These ancestors, therefore, must not be forgotten. Reverence and worship of ancestors is one of the

fundanmental principles of the Shinto faith.

Wisdom Of Shinto

- "All men are brothers"
- "When prayer fails to help you accomplish your purpose, know that something is lacking in your sincerity"
- "Do not profess love with your lips while you harbour hatred in your heart"
- "One should not be mindful of suffering in his own life and unmindful of suffering in the lives of others"
- "In all the world there is no such thing as a stranger"

Comparative Study

The Shinto religion is an "unfounded" religion in the sense that it cannot be traced to any known founder and appears to have evolved from ancient Japanese folk beliefs.

While the ethical system of the Shinto faith is reasonably well developed, its spiritual philosophy is very primitive. The religion revolves around nature worship and is highly disinterested in intellectual and philosophical speculation.

Among the major religions of the world, the Shinto religion comes closest to Hinduism. Both have a rich blend of tradition and mythology and both lack a known founder. But while most Hindu beliefs are a result of intellectual curiosity and philosophical speculation, Shinto beliefs appear primitive and superstitious by comparison. While Hindu triad has its basis in Brahman, the One God, there is no such concept of One Supreme Being in the Shinto religion, not at least in the way the faith exists today.

The Shinto religion is an ethnic faith; it is meant for the people of Japan only. Until very recently, the Shinto religion demanded complete loyalty to the King of Japan. The Japanese monarchy is a hereditary institution, existing in the same family for 124 generations since Emperor Jimmu, the first Emperor of Japan. The Japanese Emperor is also the high priest of the Shinto religion. Today, Shinto is more of a Japanese culture or a way of life than a true religion.

ZOROASTRIANISM

Some Basic Facts

Name	Religion named after the founder, Zoroaster
Founder	Zarathustra, called Zoroaster by the Greeks (around 1500 BC)
Place of Origin	Steppe lands to the east of the Caspian Sea (Iran)
Sacred Books	Zend-Avesta (The Law and Commentaries)
Sacred Places	Yazd and Kerman, in Iran; Udwada, in India
Festivals	Gahambars Muktad — the festival of all souls Khordad Sal — celebration marking the birth of Zoroaster Zarthosht no diso — celebration marking the death of Zoroaster

Introduction

Zoroaster was born in the area east of the Caspian Sea. At the time of his birth this area was in north-east Persia, but now it lies in southern USSR. The Indo-Iranian race living in that part of the world used to worship many nature gods such as the Rain-god, the Sun-god, the Fertility-god, and so on.

According to legend, Zoroaster used to meditate a great deal. One time he went up to the top of Mount Sabalan to live in isolation. There, in a flash of enlightenment, he found what he was seeking:

"From good must come good; and from evil, evil"

The good cannot create evil, and the evil cannot create good.

According to Zoroastrianism, there are two forces in the world: one is the Wise Lord (Ahura Mazda), and the other is the Destructive Spirit (Angra Mainyu). The two great forces or beings have no contact with each other. Men must choose between the two spirits because there can't be any compromise. Ahura Mazda is the Supreme

God in the Zoroastrian religion and, therefore, worthy of absolute worship.

The Zoroastrians believe that Zoroaster was a prophet through whom the Divine revelation was given to mankind. Zoroaster forbade the worship of idols and instead instituted the worship of Ahura Mazda, the Wise Lord. He also told the people that on a Day of Judgment, good will overcome evil.

History Of Zoroastrianism

The first 1,000 years of Zoroastrian religion are shrouded in mystery. Persia at the time was just emerging out of the stone age and writing was not known to the people. No records, therefore, exist of this early period.

Then in 599 BC, Cyrus came to power in a small Persian kingdom and, in a matter of twenty years, conquered all of Persia and the mighty Babylonian Empire. After the fall of Babylon, Cyrus allowed the Jews to return to their homeland. These Jews had been exiled since Babylon conquered the southern kingdom of Judah in 586 BC, during the time of Prophet Jeremiah.

Cyrus founded the Achaemenid dynasty which ruled the greatest empire the world had then known. He adopted Zoroastrianism as the state religion, spreading it in the entire kingdom. Some of the great kings of this dynasty include Darius (522-486 BC), Xerxes (486-465 BC), and Artaxerxes (465-424 BC). The Achaemenid Empire was eventually brought to an end in 331 BC by Alexander the Great or, as he is known in the Persian history, Alexander the Vandal.

After the death of Alexander, the descendents of one of his generals, the Seleucids, ruled Persia for many years until a new Persian dynasty by the name of Parthians grew powerful enough to expel them. The Parthians ruled Iran for nearly 500 years and continuously fought with the Roman Empire in the west. It was during the Parthian rule that the teachings of Zoroaster began to be compiled in the form of a holy book, the Avesta.

Around 224 AD, a ruler of a south-western province in Persia rebelled against the Parthians and established the Sasanid Empire,

named after a legendary ancestor, Sasan. The Sasanids ruled Persia for over four centuries till the Muslim armies defeated their kingdom in 642 AD, in the battle of Nihawand. In 652 AD, the last Zoroastrian king of the Sasanid Empire, Yazdigard III, died. It is from his coronation, held in 632 AD, that the Zoroastrians date their calendar using the convention AY, for After Yazdigard.

After the fall of the Sasanid Empire, a majority of the population of Iran accepted Islam and the number of Zoroastrians started to decline rapidly. In the tenth cnetury AD, a small group of Zoroastrians left their Persian homeland and emigrated to India where they began to be called ***Parsis*** meaning Persians. Although the religion of Zoroastrianism originated and flourished in Persia, today there are more followers of this ancient faith living in India than in their original homeland.

Essential Beliefs Of Zoroastrianism

1. Zoroastrians believe that there are two independent and rival forces in nature: the good force in the form of Ahura Mazda (the Wise Lord) and the evil force in the form of Angra Mainyu.
2. Man has the free will to chose either good or evil.
3. Man must stay on the side of Ahura Mazda so that on the Day of Judgment the good may overcome evil.
4. To properly ally himself with Ahura Mazda, man must acquire the following virtues:
    - Truth
    - Charity
    - Good thoughts, good words, good deeds.
5. A man should pray to Ahura Mazda for all his needs.
6. When a man dies, his soul crosses a narrow bridge over hell. The good man crosses over safely and is welcomed by a beautiful maiden. But for the evil man, the bridge becomes narrow until he falls down in hell.

7. Hell and heaven are not eternal in Zoroastrian belief. The purpose of all punishment is to reform.
8. At the end of time there will appear a saviour who will revive the dead, reward the good and punish the bad.

Worship In Zoroastrianism

1. Prayer

   Zoroastrians say their daily prayers five times each day. Before saying their prayer, they perform ablution. The prayers are always said facing a light (sun, fire or lamp). All prayers are said while standing and in the sacred language of the Avesta.

2. Ceremonies

   Many stages in the life of a person are marked by religious ceremonies. These include:

   - Birth rites
   - Initiation, around the age of ten
   - Marriage
   - Death

The Zoroastrians neither bury their dead nor cremate them. The dead body is first washed, then wrapped in clean clothes, and finally placed in the Towers of Silence to decompose naturally and to be consumed by birds.

The fire is considered sacred in this religion and plays an important role in all their worships and ceremonies.

Comparative Study

Zoroastrianism is a very ancient religion going back to about the time of Moses. But while Judaism was blessed by a series of Israelite prophets who came after Moses, no such successors seem to have come in Persia after Zoroaster. Zoroastrianism, therefore, maintained much of its early primitive features and teachings and its religious philosophy did not keep pace with the times.

Both Judaism and Zoroastrianism appeared in the world around the same time and in areas not too distant from each other. Over the years, the two faiths influenced not only each other but also the religions of India and China. Some of the religious concepts that are common to both Judaism and Zoroastrianism are;

- concept of One God
- concept of Angels
- concept of devil or satan
- concept of hell and heaven
- concept of a day of judgment
- concept of a latter-day Messiah

Because of the discontinuation of revelation in the Zoroastrian religion, this faith started to become outdated and by the time Islam came, a majority of the Zoroastrians adopted the new religion. It is interesting to note that of the three pre-Islamic religions of the Near East—Judaism, Christianity and Zoroastrianism—only the followers of Zoroaster embraced Islam in large numbers.

Today, Zoroastrianism is gradually becoming extinct from the world; there are less than 100,000 followers remaining, mostly in India. One reason for this gradual decline is the fact that Zoroastrianism is a strongly ethnic religion and conversions are not possible. People can get out of this faith but no new converts can enter it. A faith meant for a people, therefore, dies with the people!

JUDAISM

Some Basic Facts

Name	The names Judaism, Judea and Jew are all derived from Judah, the brother of Joseph and the fourth son of Jacob
Founder	Judaism in the present form was founded by Moses (1525 - 1405 BC)
Place of Origin	Babylon-Canaan-Egypt area
Sacred Books	The Hebrew Bible (Old Testament), consists of 39 books including the five books of the Torah
Sacred Places	Jerusalem
Festivals	Rosh Hashanah the Jewish New Year Yom Kippur the Day of Atonement Sukkot the feast of Tabernacles Simchat Torah rejoicing of the Law

Introduction

Judaism is one of the oldest religions in the world and had significant influence on the development of two other monotheisms, Christianity and Islam. The central doctrine of Judaism is the Unity of God. But along with this doctrine goes the belief that the Jewish people are God's chosen people, and that God wants them to be an example to all mankind.

Judaism, therefore, is an ethnic religion and its history is the history of the Hebrew people. These people trace their ancestory to the great patriarch, Abraham, who lived in Chaldaea around 2,000 BC. Chaldaea is in the eastern part of the ***Fertile Crescent*** which extends from the areas of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers to the eastern coast of the Mediterranean.

The Chaldaeans used to worship idols and images, and Abraham revolted against this practice. Abraham used to receive revelations from God and during one of these revelations God made a Covenant

THE FERTILE CRESCENT
CASPIAN SEA
BLACK SEA
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
RED SEA
P. GULF
ARABIA
EGYPT
Fertile Crescent
R. Tigris
ASSYRIA
MESOPOTAMIA
R. Euphrates
Haran
Damascus
PALESTINE
Babylon
BABYLONIA (CHALDAEA)
Ur
Isfahan
Persepolis
Sinai
Midian
Memphis

THE PROMISED LAND
LAND OF CANAAN
Damascus
Sidon
Tyre
Sea of Galilee
Dead Sea
Samaria
Jerusalem
Mediterranean Ocean
Brook of Egypt
1400 BC
UNITED KINGDOM
SIDONIANS
Damascus
Sidon
Tyre
ISRAEL
Samaria
Jerusalem
MOAB
PHILISTINES
1000 BC
KINGDOM DIVIDED
SIDONIANS
Damascus
Sidon
Tyre
ISRAEL
Samaria
Jerusalem
MOAB
PHILISTINES
JUDAH
900 BC

with his people. In this Covenant, God promised Abraham's descendents all the land of Canaan and God's protection in exchange for their homage and allegience. The followers of Judaism still call themselves ***the Sons of the Covenant*** or B'nai B'rith in Hebrew.

Abraham spoke the Hebrew language and his descendents, therefore, are called Hebrew people. But a grandson of Abraham, by the name of Jacob, was given the title of Israel by God in one of his revelations, and the descendents of Jacob began to be called Israelites. Jacob had twelve sons from whom descended the Biblical Twelve Tribes.

A son of Jacob, by the name of Joseph, was appointed a governor of a province of Egypt by a benevolent king. During his time many Israelites migrated to Egypt from their homeland in the Canaan-Babylonia area. The later kings of Egypt, however, treated the Israelites badly who spent the next three hundred years in bondage and servitude under their Egyptian masters.

Some five hundred years after Abraham, one of his descendents by the name of Moses arose and unified the Israelites living in Egypt. Moses eventually led the Israelites out of Egypt towards the land of Canaan.

On the way to Canaan, Moses experienced a vision on Mount Sinai and received the famous Ten Commandments from God. These ten Commandments became the foundation on which the teachings of the Torah were later amplified. Although Judaism contains teachings going as far back as Noah and Abraham, its present form and structure was established essentially by Moses.

After the death of Moses and after their wanderings in the desert for nearly forty years, the Israelites finally settled down in the Canaan area. Here, in the year 1043 BC, the first Israelite kingdom was established by King Saul. Saul was followed by the two great prophet-kings of the Israelites, David and his son Solomon. After the death of Solomon, the united kingdom of Israel broke up into two separate kingdoms: the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah.

The northern kingdom of Israel lasted until 722 BC when its capital, Samaria, fell to the conquering Assyrians. The southern kingdom of

Judah lasted till 586 BC when its capital, Jerusalem, fell to the conquering Babylonians. The Babylonians exiled the Jews from Jerusalem and destroyed their holy city. It was only when Cyrus of Persia defeated the Babylonians in 539 BC that the exiled Israelites were allowed to return to their homeland and rebuild the city of Jerusalem.

The six hundred year period, from the start of the united kingdom to year 400 BC, is one of the most glorious periods in the Israelite history or, for that matter, the history of the world. It was during this period that most of the known prophets of the world appeared. One could even call this period ***the Age of the Prophets.***

Some of the great prophets like Elijah, Elisha, Jonah, Amos, Ezekiel, Job, Ezra and Malachi appeared in this period. It was also during this period that the founders of four other great religions, Mahavira, Buddha, Confucius and Lao-tze, appeared in India and China. With the death of Malachi, the last of the Israelite prophets, the Old Testament comes to a close around 400 BC.

The Old Testament, or the Hebrew Bible as the Jews prefer to call it, is the sacred book of Judaism. It contains not only the five books of Torah revealed to Moses, but many other books attributed to later prophets such as Joshua, Samuel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Job, Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Zechariah and Malachi.

Besides the Hebrew Bible, there are two other texts considered sacred by the Jews: the Mishnah and the Talmud. The Mishnah is a collection of religious laws arranged in six orders which cover agricultural tithes, festivals, marriage, civil laws, sacrifices and ritual purity. The Mishnah was codified around 200 A.D. under Rabbi Judah the Prince. The Talmuds are commentaries on the Mishnah and were written by the middle of the sixth century A.D. in Aramaic, the everday language of the Jewish people of the time.

The Essential Beliefs Of Judaism

Although there are many beliefs in Judaism, there are 13 articles of faith considered essential. These are:

1. The belief in God
2. The belief that there is only one God

3. The belief in the non-corporeal nature of God
4. The belief that God is the First and the Last
5. The belief that God is All-knowing, All-Seeing and the Lord
6. The belief that prayers should only be directed to God
7. The belief that God rewards the good and punishes the bad
8. The belief that all the words of the prophets are true
9. The belief that Moses is the chief of all prophets
10. The belief that the present Torah is the same as revealed to Moses
11. The belief that the Law of Torah is the last law from God
12. The belief in the coming of the Messiah
13. The belief in the Resurrection

The central belief expressed in the Hebrew Bible concerns the Unity and love of God. This is evident from the Hebrew declaration of faith, the Shemah, which could be considered equivalent to the Islamic *kalima*:

> "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is One.
>
> And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your might
>
> And these words which I command you shall be upon your heart" (Deuteronomy 6:4-6)

The Codes For Social And Moral Conduct

The Hebrew Bible contains hundreds of codes and directives for the Israelites by which to conduct their spiritual and worldly affairs. Of these, the Ten Commandments are the most famous:

1. You shall have no other gods besides Me
2. You shall not make any image or likeness of anything in heaven above
3. You shall not take the name of the Lord in vain
4. Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy
5. Honour your father and your mother
6. You shall not commit murder
7. You shall not commit adultery
8. You shall not steal

9. You shall not bear false witness
10. You shall not covet anything that is your neighbour's

Some additional directives besides the Ten Commandments are given below:

You shall not oppress your neighbour

You shall do no injustice in weight or in measure

You shall seek no vengeance

Open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor

You shall not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind

You shall do no injustice in judgment; you shall not be partial toward the poor, nor favour the mighty

You shall not wrong the stranger. The stranger among you shall be as the home-born among you, and you shall love him as yourself

Modes Of Worship In Judaism

All acts of worship in Judaism are based on three principles which are:

(i) That God should be praised and worshiped
(ii) That man should ask his Lord for all his needs
(iii) That man can commune with God through prayer

The various acts of worship in Judaism including prayer, singing of God's praise, fasting, observing the day of Sabbath, giving of sacrifices, are all based on the three fundamental principles given above. The various rituals followed in Jewish worship are:

1. The Prayer

There are three daily prayers which include the Shemah and other passages from the Hebrew Bible and the post Biblical works. The prayer also includes meditation and asking of individual favours and

blessings. The prayers are said in the morning, afternoon and evening, either at home or in the synagogue.

2. Mezuzah

This is a small wooden case inscribed with the Shemah and another discourse from Deuteronomy. This case is fastened to the doorpost of one's home and each time, upon going out or coming in, the Mezuzah is touched with the tips of two fingers, which are then kissed. The entire ritual is symbolic of remembering God in all goings-in and goings-out.

3. Feast of Passover

In this ritual, which takes place during the annual Feast of Passover, the entire family participates. The occasion marks the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt. The ritual celebrations include the invoking of blessings, singing of the first chapter of Genesis and saying of prayers.

4. Observing the Sabbath

This is the Jewish weekly holy day and begins on Friday after sunset and ends with the sunset on Saturday. The day is essentially devoted to services in the synagogue and prayers. No work of any kind is permitted on this day. The orthodox Jews neither drive nor undertake any journey on this day.

5. Kosher Foods

It is a duty of the Jews to eat kosher food—food fit according to Jewish dietary laws. According to these laws, meat and dairy products must not be served in the same meal. Only meat of certain animals is permitted; pork and shellfish are forbidden. Furthermore, the animals must be slaughtered in the proper Jewish way.

The Wisdom Of Judaism

The following sayings are taken from the Hebrew Bible to give the reader some idea of the wisdom contained in this religion:

- "What does the Lord require of you? Only to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God"

- "What is hateful to thee, do not to thy fellow man do"
- "He who oppresses the poor blasphemes his Maker, but he who has mercy on the needy, honours Him"
- "One can enter the heavenly kingdom without diamonds, but not without honesty"
- "The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away"
- "Better a dinner of herbs where love is, than a roasted ox with hatred"
- "Say not anything which cannot be understood at once"
- "Separate not yourself from the community"
- "The price of wisdom is above pearls"
- "Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all sins"
- "Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us"
- "To the wise the path of life goes upward"
- "Where there is no vision, the people perish"
- "As he thinks in his heart, so is he"
- "Let justice flow like waters, and righteouseness like a mighty stream"
- "Rejoice not when your enemy falls, and let not your heart be glad when he stumbles".
- "If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat, and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink"
- "For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under the heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant and a time to harvest"

Comparative Study

While the beliefs and principles of Judaism are of universal appeal, its history has associated them with a national group, speaking a national language and living in their native land. Judaism, therefore, developed strictly as an ethnic religion for the descendents of

Abraham and Jacob.

Despite being fairly ancient and ethnic, Judaism formalized some of the most basic principles of man's religion, in a form not accomplished before. Two other faiths that are as old as Judaism— Hinduism and Zoroastrianism—both lack the **sophistication** in spiritual philosophy and in the social and moral codes, which we find in Judaism.

Of all the religions of the world, Islam is closest to Judaism. Both are strongly monotheistic, far more than Christianity. Both have a well developed law and social and moral codes. Both have more or less similar religious philosophies: beliefs in One God, the angels, the prophets, the Day of Judgment, and the carrying out of service to humanity. In fact, both religions trace their ancestries to Prophet Abraham; the Jews through Abraham's son Isaac, and the Quraysh of Mecca through Abraham's son Ishmael.

Basically, there are two differences that set these relistions apart:

(i)The Jews believe in the finality of the Mosaic Law while the Muslims believe in the finality of the Quranic Law.

(ii)The Jews do not believe in the prophethood of any one after the Prophet Malachi. The Muslims believe in the continutiy of prophethood after Malachi in the persons of John the Baptist, Jesus Christ, and Muhammad.

All other differences are either as a consequences of the above, or interpretational, and fundamentally non-essential.

Although the Jews believe in the coming of the Messiah, they do not recognize him in the person of Jesus Christ. The reason for this is the statement in the Book of Malachi which prophesied the return of the Prophet Elijah before the coming of Messiah. The Jews take the returning of Elijah literally, and do not agree with the Christian or Muslim belief that Elijah has returned in the form of John the Baptist.

CHRISTIANITY

Some Basic Facts

Name	The word ***Christian*** was first used by the Greeks for the followers of ***Christos,*** as the Greeks used to call the Messiah.	
Founder	Jesus Christ, which is the Greek rendering of the original Hebrew name Isa al-Masih, meaning Isa the Anointed. (Born: 4-7 BC)	
Place of Origin	Palestine area	
Sacred Books	The New Testament. It includes the four Gospels and 23 other books	
Sacred Places	Bethlehem, Nazareth, Jerusalem	
Festivals	Christmas	which celebrates Jesus' birth
	Easter	which celebrates the resurrection of Jesus
	Ascension	which celebrates the ascension of Jesus to heaven, forty days after the Easter
	Pentecost	which celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit to the apostles, ten days after the Ascension.

Introduction

Christianity is the faith with the largest following in the world. The term ***Christian*** was used for the first time after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, for people who associated themselves with the teachings of ***Christos.*** Although other religions like Zoroastrianism, Buddhism and Confucianism are also named after their respective founders, the attachment and the reverence which the Christians display for Jesus Christ is quite different. The person of Jesus Christ is worshiped by his followers and is central to the teachings and philosophy of Christianity.

Strangely, no other prophet has appeared in history whose birth, life, death, and teachings have been the subject of greater controversy than Jesus Christ's. Likewise, very few other religions have been so

drastically misinterpreted by their own followers as the religion of Christianity. In what follows, we will try to explain the reasons for this rather unique development of this religion.

JESUS CHRIST

Jesus was born in Bethlehem, in the provice of Judaea, anywhere between 4 to 7 BC. The Christians believe, and majority of the Muslims concur with this belief, that Jesus was born to Mary, his mother, without the agency of a human father. Joseph, the husband of Mary, is supposed to have married her after the conception of Jesus.

Jesus was born among the Israelites and the Gospels trace his ancestry to Prophet David, through his "father" Joseph. Jesus, therefore, was not only born a Jew but was also raised and educated according to the Judaic tradition.

Early in his life he became a Jewish rabbi, but was opposed by the orthodox Jewish priests for preaching his radical teachings. At the age of thirty, Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River by John the Baptist, who was then heralding the coming of the Messiah. Jesus' ministry is believed to have started after his baptism. When the Jews raised the objection that how can the Messiah come before the reappearance of Prophet Elijah, Jesus is said to have responded by pointing out that John the Baptist was in fact Elijah.

Jesus' ministry in the Palestine area lasted about three years. During this short period he is said to have performed a number of miracles and healed many a people of their illnesses. Jesus' teachings emphasized the gentler elements of the Mosaic teachings and condemned the rigid, often cruel, application of the Law. His open criticism of the Jewish priests and his rapidly increasing popularity among the masses, made him an enemy of both the Jews and the Romans.

As a result, Jesus was first made to appear in front of the Jewish religious authorities who, after questioning him at great length, passed him on to the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate. Pilate believed in the innocence of Jesus Christ but, at the demand of the people and the priests, condemned him to crucifixion.

Jesus was put on the cross on Friday. With the start of the Jewish Sabbath at sunset, Jesus' body was released to his followers, after the Roman soldiers had assumed that he had died. For the next two days Jesus' body was placed in a cave. After this period Jesus was seen alive by a number of his disciples and ate with them. Later on, according to the Christian belief, Jesus was taken up to heaven.

The Ahmadi belief in this regard is that Jesus recovered from his wounds, met and ate with his disciples and left the Palestine area, travelling eastward to Afghanistan and Kashmir. The Ahmadies believe that Jesus lived to a ripe old age, died in Kashmir and is buried in Sri Nagar.

Development Of Christianity After The Crucifixion of Jesus

Although all religions change with time, the changes which occurred in Christianity after the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, affected the fundamental beliefs and principles of this religion. The developments in Christianity, from the moment of crucifixion when there were only a handful of devoted followers, to the time when it became a dominant force in much of Middle East and Europe, can be divided into two phases: the Jewish Phase and the Greek-Roman Phase.

The Jewish Phase (30-70 AD)

In the beginning, Christianity was totally limited to the Jewish people. The God of Christians had the same attributes as the God of the Israelite people. The early Christians also followed the Jewish traditions of circumcision, offering animal sacrifices and observing the Sabbath. They did not believe that Jesus was the son of God, not at least in the literal sense.

The early Christians also knew that Jesus had survived the ordeal of the crucifixion and, therefore, did not subscribe to the idea of his resurrection. The only difference between these early Christians and the Jews was that the former believed in Jesus as the Messiah and considered ***faith*** in God more important than the following of the rigid Mosaic Law or the rituals of the rabbis.

The Greek-Roman Phase (70-500 AD)

Initially, the disciples of Jesus Christ preached the new faith only to the Hebrew peoples. But with the conversion of Saul, a Jewish rabbi, to Christianity, all this changed. He took on the name of Paul and travelled extensively throughout Asia Minor and eastern Europe, preaching the new religion to the gentiles or non-Israelites.

The Greek civilization was the most advanced at the time and very receptive to the teachings of the new faith. Having no emotional or traditional attachment with the Judaic tenets, the Greek converts quickly gave up many Jewish customs such as animal sacrifice, circumcision and the observing of the Sabbath and the Law.

Then, with accession of Constantine the Great to power in 313 AD, Christianity became the official religion of the Eastern Roman Empire. The establishment of Christianity as the state religion of the Roman Empire brought it great respect and prestige. Armed with this powerful political backing and supported by Greek intellectualism, Christianity started spreading rapidly among the "barbarian" tribes of northern and western Europe.

As the number of Hebrew Christians declined and the number and influence of the Greek Christians increased, many of the fundamental beliefs and practices of this new faith started to undergo significant changes. The concept of God changed from the personal, loving God of the Israelites to an impersonal, supreme deity, palatable to the Greek philosophical rationalism.

Similarly, while the Hebrew Christians were ingrained in the strong monotheism of the Old Testament and could accept Jesus as the son of God only in a metaphorical sense, the Greeks, having no such reservations, took the words literally. The Greeks used to believe in many gods and deities and had no intellectual hurdle in transforming a prophet into a god.

It was during this Helenistic period, therefore, that the divinity of Jesus Christ and his resurrection after crucifixion became popular Christian beliefs. It was also in the same period that the terminology of ***Trinity*** came into existence to explain the combination of God, Jesus

Christ and the Holy Spirit.

The Essential Beliefs Of Christianity

Although there are over 250 sects of the Christians today, some essential beliefs are shared by all of them. These basic beliefs are:

1. Belief in God, Almighty, Creator of all things
2. Belief in Jesus as the Messiah, and the Son of God (whether metaphorically or literally)
3. Belief in Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost
4. Belief in eternal sin (that man is born a sinner)
5. Belief that Jesus Christ came down to earth from heaven for the salvation of mankind
6. Belief that the Bible (both Old and New Testaments) is the only porper guidance for mankind
7. Belief in baptism as a remission of sin
8. Belief that sins can be forgiven through repentence
9. Belief in life after death
10. Belief that those who repent and follow Jesus Christ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven

The Christians not only believe that Jesus Christ is alive and accessible, but also that he is directing the affairs of the Church from his seat in heaven and that one day he will return to this world to establish the Kingdom of God. Except for a small minority of Unitarians and Universalists, all Christians today worship Jesus Christ in one form or another.

Worship In Christianity

Worship in Christianity varies considerably with the sect and the geographic location in the world. Worship may be private and individual or congregational. Private worship generally takes the form of "silent prayer" invoking God's mercy and help usually through the person of Jesus Christ.

Congregational worship in the churches takes on the form of an elaborate pageant involving priests in their ornate robes and music sung by the choir. The congregation usually joins in the singing of hymns and psalms while the priest may deliver a sermon.

Many Christians keep the fasts of lent, a forty-day period before Easter. These fasts are kept in memory of the forty days Jesus spent fasting in the wilderness before beginning his public ministry.

An important Christian rite involves baptism. In the early days of Christianity, baptism marked the initiation into the new faith. The new convert was given a public "washing" symbolizing the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Today, some churches still carry out this rite on the confession of personal faith by believers. Other churches perform baptism on new born children on the promise that they be "confirmed" in their faith later.

The Teachings of Jesus Christ

To properly understand the teachings of Jesus Christ one has to turn to the Gospels. The only place in the Gospels where an attempt has been made by the narrators to quote Jesus Christ word-for-word, is the account of the Sermon on the Mount. This sermon illustrates the emphasis of Jesus' teachings which was directed towards an unpretentious, honest and altruistic life. Below are quoted some selected verses from this sermon.

> "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called children of God. Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness: for their's is the kingdom of heaven...
>
> "Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you...

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven...

"You have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment.

"You have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you, that whosoever looks on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart...

"You have heard that it has been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you, that you resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also...

"Give to him that asks of thee, and from him that would borrow, turn not thou away.

"You have heard that it has been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you and persecute you...

"Take heed that you not give your alms before men, to be seen of them; otherwise you have no reward... Therefore when you do give alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets... But when you do give alms, let not your left hand know what your right hand does...

"And when you pray, you shall not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men...

"For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father

will also forgive you...

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust does corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal...

"For with what judgment you judge, you shall be judged. and with what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again.

"And why do you notice the speck in your brother's eye, but consider not the beam in your own eye?... First cast out the beam out of your own eye, and then you shall see clearly to cast out the speck out of your brother's eye...

"All things you would like others do to you, you do to them...

"Enter you at the straight gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction. Because straight is the gate and narrow is the way, which leads unto life..."

Comparative Study

Basically, there is little difference between the teachings of Judaism and the teachings of Jesus Christ. Christianity, shorn of its later encrustations, is simply a sect of Judaism—a sect which had recognized the Messiah in the person of Jesus Christ.

The teachings of Jesus Christ are clearly of a reformatory nature. He saw many wrongs in the way the Mosaic Law was being interpreted and applied by the people, and tried to correct them.

There is no doubt that some of Jesus' teachings about love, forgiveness and charity were indeed revolutionary. And it was this aspect of extreme humility that attracted a number of his followers among the Hebrews and, later on, among the Greeks and the Romans. But having a few revolutionary ideas does not make a new religion.

The early Christians retained their Judaic traditions and practices. It was only when the Greeks adopted the teachings of Jesus Christ that they started formalizing them within the framework of a new theology... a theology now centred around the person of Jesus Christ himself. History shows very clearly this gradual process of Jesus'

deification from an Israelite prophet to the Son of God.

From the point of view of a Muslim, the present day Christians have grossly misunderstood some basic historic facts. The misunderstndings are caused by:

(1) Taking literal meaning of the Hebrew phrase, "Son of God"

(2) Shrouding the events of crucifixion in great mystery and superstition

(3) Not understanding the true purpose of prophets

(4) Considering the New Testament as the authentic and final word of God.

Once all these misunderstandings are removed, the life of Jesus Christ clearly shows that:

- he was an Israelite prophet
- his main objective was to reform Judaism
- he did not die on the cross
- he recovered from the ordeal of crucifixion
- he ate food with his disciples like mortal beings
- he travelled to the east in search of the lost tribes of the Israelites
- he died and was buried in Kashmir.

APPENDIX

BOOKS FOR FURTHER READING

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING

ISLAM

1. ***The Essence Of Islam***
   Extracts from the writings of the Promised Messiah
   Volumes I and II (1979); pp-328 and 355

2. ***Philosophy Of The Teachings Of Islam,*** by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1897).

   [English translation of the Promised Messiah's book, *Islami Usool ki Philosophy*]

3. ***The Religion Of Islam,*** by Maulana Muhammad Ali (1973); pp-677.

   [A very comprehensive account of the beliefs, acts of worship and social and moral codes of Islam. Arrangement of the book is very good]

4. ***Islam In Focus,*** by Hammudah Abdalatai; pp-211

   [A very well arranged, well written book on various Islamic beliefs, concepts and acts or worship. A very concise, to-the-point treatment of the subject]

5. ***The Spirit Of Islam,*** by Ameer Ali (1982); pp-515

   [A fairly comprehensive treatment of Islam]

6. ***The Eternal Message Of Muhammad,*** by Abd-al-Rahman Azzam (1979); pp-297

   [As the name implies, this book emphasizes the essence of the Prophet's teachings and its impact upon the people]

7. ***Islam, A Way Of Life,*** by P.K. Hitti (1970); pp-198

   [A well written book by the famous orientalist. Also includes brief treatment of Arab science and Islamic culture, philosophy and literature]

8. ***Islam,*** Edited by J.A. Williams (1962); pp-256

   [A well written book. Also treats the Quran, Hadith and the Law]

9. ***Islam, Its Meaning For Modern Man,*** by Muhammad Zafrullah Khan (1980); pp-216

   [Besides basic Islamic worships and social codes, the book covers such topics as public affairs, international relations, man and the universe, and the role of Islam]

10. ***Islam,*** by C. E. Farah
11. ***Understanding Islam,*** by T.W. Lippman
12. ***Themes Of Islamic Civilization,*** by J.A. Williams
13. ***Ideals And Realities Of Islam,*** by S.H. Nasr
14. ***Islam,*** by R. el-Droubie
15. ***Islam,*** by A. Guillaume
16. ***Islam,*** by Fazlur Rahman
17. ***The House Of Islam,*** by K. Cragg
18. ***Understanding Islam,*** by F. Schuon
19. ***Introduction To Islam,*** by M. Hamidullah
20. ***Islam, Its Meaning And Message,*** by K. Ahmad
21. ***Islamic Worship,*** by M. Z. Khan
22. ***Islam At A Glance,*** by S. Islahi
23. ***Concept Of Islam,*** by S. Islahi
24. ***Hajj,*** by The Muslim Institute
25. ***The Venture Of Islam,*** by M. Hodgson
26. ***The Most Beautiful Names,*** by S. al-Halveti
27. ***Ninety-Nine Names Of Allah,*** by S. Friendlander

ISLAM AND RELATED SUBJECTS

1. ***The Economic Structure of Islamic Society,*** by Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad
2. ***Presenting Islam To The Christians,*** by Naseem Saifi
3. ***Islam and Human Rights,*** by M. Zafrulla Khan
4. ***Jesus, Prophet of Islam,*** by M. Ata ur-Rahim
5. ***Jesus in the Quran,*** by G. Parrinder

6. *Islamic Philosophy,* by M.S. Sheikh
7. *Moral and Spiritual Training,* by M. Bashir Ahmad

THE HOLY QURAN

1. *Introduction to the study of the Holy Quran,* by Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad (1969); pp-262

   [About 45 pages devoted to the Holy Quran; the rest of the book covers the life of the Holy Prophet and some comparative aspects of other faiths *vis-a-vis* Islam. Subject matter is extremely well arranged]

2. *Commentary On Surah Fatiha,* by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad

   [Compiled from the writings and pronouncements of the Promised Messiah and translated into English by Muhammad Zafrulla Khan]

3. *The Holy Quran,* —various English translations
4. *Bell's introduction to the Quran,* by W. Montgomery Watt (1970); pp-258

   [A good book covering such topics as the history of the Quranic text, the Quranic style, the shaping of the Quran, its chronology and the doctrines of the Quran]

5. *The Wisdom of the Quran,* by M. M. Katircioglu
6. *The Jewels of the Quran,* by al-Ghazali
7. *The Quran, Basic Teachings,* by T.B. Irving

HADITH LITERATURE

1. *Sahih Bukhari* (English translation)
2. *Sahih Muslim* (English translation)
3. *Gardens of the Righteous,* by M. Zafrulla Khan
4. *A Manual of Hadith,* by Muhammad Ali
5. *Wisdom of the Holy Prophet,* by M. Zafrulla Khan
6. *A Selection of the Sayings of the Holy Prophet,* by B. A. Bashir
7. *Thus Spoke the Holy Prophet,* by Bannet & Browne

ISLAMIC HISTORY

1. ***Muhammad, Seal of the Prophets,*** by Muhammad Zafrulla Khan (1980); pp-289

   [An excellent biography of the Holy Prophet. Material is well arranged and the writing is very lucid]

2. ***A Study of Islamic History,*** by K. Ali (1978); pp-368

   [Covers the period from the birth of the Holy Prophet to the end of the Abbasid Caliphate in 1258 AD. An excellent reference for dates. Brief, to-the-point accounts]

3. ***Spirit of Islam,*** by Ameer Ali (1982); pp-515

   [Includes only 122 pages on the life of the Holy Prophet. The rest of the book is devoted to selected aspects of the religion of Islam]

4. ***Muhammad, His life Based on the Earliest Sources,*** by Martin Lings (1983); pp-359

   [Well written and extremely well arranged book. A very unbiased account by an orientalist. Highly recommended]

5. ***The Life of Muhammad,*** by Muhammad Husayn Haykal (1976); pp-639

   [An extremely detailed, well written and comprehensive biography of the Holy Prophet. The material is very well arranged and thoroughly researched]

6. ***History of the Arabs,*** by P. K. Hitti (1946); pp-767

   [An excellent account of the history of the Arabs from the time of the Holy Prophet's birth to early sixteenth century. The life of the Prophet is described briefly and the bulk of the book is devoted to post Muhammadan period]

7. ***The Arabs In History,*** by B. Lewis

8. ***The Glorious Caliphate,*** by Athar Husain

9. ***The Early Islamic Conquests,*** by F.M. Donner

10. ***A Short History of the Saracens,*** by Amir Ali

11. ***Hundred Great Muslims,*** by Jamil Ahmad

12. *A Political History of Muslim Sapin,* by S.M. Imamuddin
13. *Glimpses of Islamic History,* by Irfan Faqih
14. *Stories of Great Muslims,* by A. Haye
15. *Muhammad, Prophet and Statesman,* by W. M. Watt
16. *Muhammad,* by M. Cook
17. *Muhammad,* by M. Rodinson
18. *Muhammad The Holy Prophet,* byH.G. Sarwar
19. *Muhammad in Quran,* by A. M. Raza
20. *Muhammad the Prophet,* by Muhammad Ali
21. *Muhammad in the Bible,* by Jamal Badawi
22. *Muhammad Rasulullah,* by M. Hamidullah
23. *The Eternal Message of Muhammad,* by A. R. Azzam
24. *Muhammad the Liberator of Women,* by Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad
25. *The Life Muhammad,* by Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad
26. *Seerat-un-Nabi,* by Shibli Nu'mani
    (Available in Urdu and English)
27. *Wives of the Prophet,* by Fida Husain
28. *The Battles of the Prophet of Allah,* by Gulzar Ahmed

AHMADIYYAT

1. *Ahmadiyyat, or the True Islam,* by Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad
2. *Invitation to Ahmadiyyat,* by Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmood Ahmad
3. *Tadhkira,* by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad

   [A compilation of the dreams, visions and revelations of the Promised Messiah. English translation by Muhammad Zafrulla Khan]

4. ***Ahmadiyyat, The Renaissance of Islam,*** by Muhammad Zafrulla Khan (1978); pp-360

   [A historical account of Ahmadiyyat from the birth of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad to the year 1974. A very well written book but the material is poorly arranged, without headings or titles]

5. ***Life of Ahmad*** (Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement) Part I, by A. R. Dard (1948); pp-622

   [Fairly detailed biographical account of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad from the time of his birth to the year 1901. The remainder of his biography was intended to be published under Part II, which could not be completed by the author in his lifetime]

6. ***Ahmadiyyat,*** by Spencer Lawan

7. ***Hazrat Maulvi Nooruddin,*** by M. Zafrulla Khan

COMPARATIVE RELIGIONS

1. ***What the Great Religions Believe,*** by Joseph Gaer (1963); pp-191

   [A good compact book]

2. ***Eerdmon's handbook to the World's Religions,*** by various contributors (1982); pp-448

   [Material not arranged systematically; too many photographs; otherwise fairly informative]

3. ***A Handbook of Living Religions,*** Edited by J. R. Hinnells (1984); pp-528

   [Recommended only for a scholar or a serious student]

4. ***Sacred texts of the World,*** Edited by N. Smart and R.D. Hecht (1982); pp-408

   [An anthology of selected portions of the sacred texts of the various religions]

5. ***Jesus in India,*** by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad

6. ***Where did Jesus Die,*** by J. D. Shams

7. ***Jesus in Heaven on Earth,*** by Khawja Nazir Ahmad

8. ***Jesus Lived in India,*** by Holger Kersten (1986); pp-242

9. ***For Christ's Sake,*** by Tom Harper (1986); pp-118
[A frank admission by a Christian journalist that Jesus Christ was not the Son of God, that he was only a Prophet and that his mission was not to found a new religion]
10. ***Religions Around the World,*** by L. Wolcott
11. ***A Comparison of World Religions,*** by H. J. Heydt
12. ***Introduction to the Study of Religion,*** by T. W. Hall
13. ***Comparative Religion,*** by A. C. Bouquet
14. ***World Religions,*** by G. Parrinder
15. ***Judaism,*** by A. Hertzberg
16. ***Judaism,*** by M. Domnitz
17. ***Judaism,*** by I. Epstein
18. ***The Prophets of Israel,*** by L. J. Wood
19. ***The History of the Jewish people,*** by M. A. Shulvass
20. ***Abraham, His Life and Times,*** by M. H. Zubeiri
21. ***Hinduism,*** by L. Renou
22. ***Hinduism,*** by Y. Crompton
23. ***Hinduism,*** by K. M. Sen
24. ***The Bhagvad Geeta***
25. ***Budhism,*** by R. A. Gard
26. ***The Budha,*** by M. Carrithers
27. ***Introduction to Sikhism,*** by G.S. Mansukhani
28. ***Zoroastrianism and the Parsis,*** by J. H. Hinnells
29. ***Zarathustra,*** by P. D. Mehta

EXERCISES

Section - I

ISLAM

THE RELIGION OF MAN

WHAT IS ISLAM

Q: What is religion? Give a brief definition.

Q: How many major religions exist in the world today?

Q: What is the last of the great religions?

Q: Who brought the religion of Islam?

Q: What is the root of the word Islam?

Q: What does the word Islam mean?

Q: What was the religion of earlier prophets?

Q: Do Muslims believe in all the prophets?

Q: Do Muslims believe in the revealed books of other religions?

Q: What are the four important aspects of the religion of Islam?

Q: What aspects of Islam concern the God and what aspects concern the fellow beings?

ISLAMIC BELIEFS — BELIEF IN GOD

Q: What is Iman and what is Aamal?

Q: What is "kufr"?

Q: What is "shirk"?

Q: What are the five articles of faith?

Q: What is the most highly emphasized attribute of God in the Quran?

Q: What is the proper name of God in Arabic?

Q: What attribute of God shows Him to be Merciful?

Q: What attribute of God shows Him to be the First?

Q: What attribute of God shows Him to be All-Knowing?

Q: What attribute of God shows Him to be All-Seeing?

Q: What attribute of God shows Him to be Gracious?

Q: What attribute of God shows Him to be unique?

Q: What attribute of God shows Him to be self-subsisting?

BELIEF IN THE ANGELS

Q: What are angels?

Q: What is the Arabic word for angel? Its plural?

Q: Which angel brought the Quranic revelations?

Q: What are the various tasks carried out by the angels?

BELIEF IN THE PROPHETS

Q: What is a prophet called in Arabic?

Q: What is a messenger called in Arabic?

Q: What is the root of the word "nabi"?

Q: Why does God send prophets in the world?

Q: Approximately how many prophets are mentioned in the Quran by name and how many in the Bible?

Q: How many distinct prophetic periods can be identified in history?

Q: What is the longest interval in history when no prophets are known to have appeared?

Q: Who was the first prophet in history?

Q: Was he also the first man who existed?

Q: During which prophet's time did the Great Flood come?

Q: Which prophet built the Ka'ba?

Q: From which prophet are descended both the Hebrews and the Quraysh of Mecca?

Q: Which Prophet lived at the same time as Prophet Abraham but was not his son?

Q: Which prophet was given the title "Israel" by God?

Q: Through which Prophet descended the Twelve Tribes of the Israelites?

Q: Which prophet was made a governor of Egypt?

Q: Which Prophet was the great-grandson of Prophet Abraham?

Q: How long did the Israelites stay in bondage under their Egyptian masters?

Q: Who freed them and took them out of Egypt to Canaan?

Q: What was this mass migration of the Israelites known as?

Q: Who was Moses' younger brother?

Q: Who was Moses' father-in-law?

Q: Which enemy of Prophet Moses was drowned in the sea?

Q: Which king established the first Israelite kingdom?

Q: Who was the first Israelite prophet in the Kingdom period?

Q: Who was the first prophet-king of the Israelites?

Q: Who built the Temple at Jerusalem?

Q: The coming of which two prophets is still awaited by the Jews?

Q: Who was the last of the Old Testament prophets?

Q: The 400-year period between Malachi and Jesus Christ is known in history as?

Q: Which prophet heralded the coming of Jesus Christ?

Q: Who was the father of John the Baptist?

Q: What was Jesus Christ's name in the Hebrew language?

Q: What does the word Christ or Messiah mean?

Q: Did Jesus actually die on the cross?

Q: Where is Jesus Christ buried?

Q: How many years, after the death of Moses, was Jesus Christ born?

Q: Jesus Christ talked about the coming of a great prophet after him. Who was this great prophet?

Q: Which prophet was responsible for the revival of Islam?

Q: How many years, after the death of Prophet Muhammad, was Mirza Ghulam Ahmad born?

Q: Were other religions in the world also founded by prophets?

Q: Were other religions in the world also founded by prophets?

Q: Name two Chapters of the Holy Quran which contain a reference to prophets coming in other nations?

Q: Who was the founder of Zoroastrian religion of Iran?

Q: Name a Prophet who came among the Hindus?

BELIEF IN THE REVEALED BOOKS

Q: What are the five revealed books mentioned in the Quran?

Q: How many books of the Old Testament make up the Torah?

Q: By what other Greek name are these five books known?

Q: What does the Book of David consist of in the Old Testament?

Q: How many versions of the Injil (Gospel) are included in the New Testament?

Q: What is the name of the last revealed book?

Q: What revealed book was written down during the lifetime of the prophet it was revealed to?

Q: What revealed book has remained completely unchanged from the day it was compiled in book form?

Q: What Arabic name of the Day of Judgment describes it as a day of great destruction?

Q: What Arabic name describes this day as the day when truth and falsehood will be separated?

Q: What Arabic name describes this day as the day when people will be gathered?

Q: What Arabic name describes this day as the day when accounts will be taken?

Q: What Arabic name describes this day as the day when people will be raised again after their death?

ISLAMIC ACTS OF WORSHIP— DECLARATION OF FAITH, PRAYER

Q: What are the five Islamic acts of worship?

Q: When a person is converted to Islam, what is the first act he must do?

Q: What is Du'a?

Q: What is Salat?

Q: How many Daily Prayers are there?

Q: At what times no Daily Prayers may be said?

Q: What three kinds of Daily Prayers are there?

Q: If a person said all his Daily Prayers, how many Fardh and Sunnah raka'ats would he say in one day?

Q: Which Daily Prayer does the Juma Prayer replace on Fridays?

Q: What other Prayer do the Muslims say besides the Daily Prayer?

Q: What is the Qiblah of the Muslims?

Q: What is the Call to Prayer called?

Q: What additional phrase is added in the morning Call?

Q: What is the person called who leads the Prayer?

FASTING

Q: During which month do the Muslims fast?

Q: How many fasts are there in the month of Ramadhan?

Q: Do children have to fast?

Q: Which Islamic festival is celebrated at the end of Ramadhan?

PILGRIMAGE

Q: For approximately how many years has the pilgrimage to Mecca been going on?

Q: Who was the first Prophet who enjoined upon his people to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca?

Q: What is the name of the Mosque surrounding the Ka'ba?

Q: During which Muslim month is the pilgrimage performed?

Q: What is the ceremony called in which the pilgrims
- go around the Ka'ba seven times:
- run between Safa and Marwa:
- throw stones at the stone pillars:
- wear two seamless white sheets:

Q: Where was the Prophet Muhammad buried?

ZAKAT

Q: What is the obligatory charity enjoined upon the Muslims?

Q: What is the rate of payment of zakat?

Q: How are the proceeds of the Zakat supposed to be spent?

CODES FOR SOCIAL AND MORAL BEHAVIOR

Q: What is voluntary charity called in Islam?

Q: What is the rate of payment of this voluntary charity?

Q: Muslims are enjoined to look after what kind of people in the society?

Q: Why do you think we should give charity?

Q: What are the various social duties of a Muslim?

Q: What kinds of foods or drinks are prohibited in Islam?

Q: Why is the taking of interest prohibited in Islam?

Q: With what salutation do Muslims greet each other?

Q: What do Muslims say when they start something?

Q: What do they say when they finish something?

Q: What do Muslims say when they talk about undertaking something in the future?

Q: What is the Islamic way of saying "thank you"?

Q: What does a person say when he sneezes?

Q: What does a person say when he hears another sneeze?

Q: What does a Muslim say when he hears a sad news of someone's death?

Q: Why is gambling prohibited in Islam?

Q : What three things are sacred in Islam and should never be violated?

THE SOURCES OF ISLAMIC LAW

Q: What are the three sources of Islamic law and knowledge?

Q: What is meant by Tradition?

Q: What is Sunnah?

Q: What is Hadith?

Q: What is the general term used for the six most authentic compilations of Tradition?

Q: Around what time were these compilations made?

Q: Which is the most authoritative of these six books?

Q: What is Ijtihad?

Q: Can recourse be made to Ijtihad if the Holy Quran or the Tradition is quite explicit on the matter?

THE SCHOOLS OF LAW IN ISLAM

Q: What is "fiqah"?

Q: What is a "faqih"

Q: What is the plural of "faqih"

Q: What are the names of the four well known "fuqaha"?

Q: The last of these fuqaha died how many years after the Hijrah?

Q: What is the name of the earliest school of law?

Q: Which school of law do the Ahmadi Muslims follow?

Q: What is the name of the book compiled by Imam Malik which contains all his decisions rendered as a judge?

Q: Which is the most conservative of the four schools?

Q: What is "fatwa"?

ISLAMIC MONTHS

Q: What is the first month of the Islamic calendar?

Q: In which Islamic month is the Pilgrimage performed?

Q: In whcih Islamic month is Eid-ul-Fitr celebrated?

Q: In which Islamic month is Eid-ul-Adha celebrated?

Q: What four months were considered sacred by the Arabs and no warfare was permitted during them?

Q: During which month was Holy Quran started to be revealed?

SECTION 2: THE HOLY QURAN

WHAT IS REVELATION; WHAT IS QURAN

Q: What is a revelation?

Q: How many years did it take for the Quran to be revealed?

Q: Who was the recipient of all the Quranic revelations?

Q: In what language was the Quran revealed?

Q: What does the word Quran mean?

Q: By what Arabic name is the Quran known which shows it to be a Discriminant?

Q: By what Arabic name is the Quran known which shows it to be an Argument?

Q: By what Arabic name is the Quran known which shows it to be the Wisdom?

Q: By what Arabic name is the Quran known which shows it to be the Truth?

SURAHS AND VERSES MECCAN AND MEDINITE CHAPTERS

Q: How many Surahs does the Quran contain?

Q: Which is the longest Surah?

Q: How many verses does it contain?

Q: Which is the shortest Surah?

Q: How many verses does it contain?

Q: Which Chapter of the Holy Quran does not contain the invocation *"In the name of God, the Gracious, the Merciful?*

Q: In which Chapter of the Quran is this invocation mentioned twice?

Q: What is meant by a "Meccan" Chapter?

Q: What is meant by a "Medinite"Chapter?

Q: How many Surahs were revealed before Hijrah?

Q: How many Surahs were revealed after Hijrah?

Q: Are most of the long Chapters placed at the beginning of the Quran or towards the end?

THE FIRST REVELATION

Q: In which year was the first revelation received by the Prophet Muhammad?

Q: Who brought this revelation?

Q: To which Surah does this first revelation belong?

Q: To which Surah do the verses of the second revelation belong?

Q: How old was the Holy Prophet at the time of the first revelation?

THE LAST REVELATION

Q: What is the name of the last whole Surah revealed to the Prophet Muhammad?

Q: Is this last Surah a "Meccan" or a "Medinite" Chapter?

Q: When and where was this last Surah revealed?

Q: To which Surah belong the very last verses revealed to the Prophet Muhammad?

CRYPTIC LETTERS OF THE QURAN

Q: What are "muqatta'at?

Q: How many letters of the alphabet have been used in the Muqatta'at?

Q: At the beginning of how many Surahs do these Muqatta'at appear?

Q: In how many various combinatons do these letters exist?

Q: What are the three single-letter Muqatta'at?

Q: Which is the most frequently used Muqatta'at in the Holy Quran?

WRITTING AND RECORDING OF THE QURAN

Q: Was the Holy Quran written down during the life of the Prophet Muhammad?

Q: Name one scribe of the Holy Quran?

Q: During the period of which caliph were standard texts of the Holy Quran prepared and circulated?

Q: In which Surah of the Holy Quran does God promise to guard the Quran?

THE NATURE OF THE SPIRITUAL WORLD THE LAW AND COMMANDMENTS

Q: What is the central theme of the Quranic teachings?

Q: What does a person do when he knowingly violates one of the commandments of the Holy Quran?

Q: What is the very first Commandment given in the Quran? (refer to Chapter 2, verse 22)

Q: What is the second Commandment given in the Quran? (refer to Chapter 2, verse 23)

Q: Give five Commandments of the Holy Quran that urge the believers to Do something.

Q: Give five Commandments of the Holy Quran that forbid the believers from doing something.

HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS

Q: How many Surahs of the Holy Quran are named after the prophets?

Q: Which Surah of the Holy Quran is devoted entirely to the account of one prophet?

Q: How many times does the name "Muhammad" occur in the Quran?

Q: The name of which companion of the Holy Prophet is mentioned in the Holy Quran?

Q: The name of which enemy of the Holy Prophet is mentioned in the Holy Quran?

Q: Name some of the earlier peoples mentioned in the Holy Quran.

THE BOOK OF WISDOM

Q: Which three Wisdoms of the Holy Quran appeal to you most?

PROPHECIES IN THE HOLY QURAN

Q: Give reference of one prophecy of the Holy Quran that was fulfilled during the life of the Holy Prophet?

Q: Give reference of one prophecy of the Holy Quran that was fulfilled after the death of the Holy Prophet?

Q: Mention any other prophecy of the Holy Quran that is not given in this book?

PRAYERS IN THE HOLY QURAN

Q: Which is the most important prayer mentioned in the Holy Quran?

Q: With what prayer did Adam and Eve ask for firgiveness from their Lord?

Q: What was Prophet Noah's prayer when he embarked on the Ark?

Q: What was Prophet Moses's prayer when he was commanded by God to take the message to the Pharaoh?

Q: Give one of the Holy Prophet's prayers mentioned in the Holy Quran?

ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF THE HOLY QURAN COMMENTARIES OF THE HOLY QURAN

Q: How many English translations of the Holy Quran exist today which were done by Ahmadi Muslims?

Q: Who did the first translation of the Holy Quran in the English language?

Q: Who wrote Tafsir Kabeer?

SECTION 3: LIFE OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD

THE SEMITIC RACE

Q: To which race do the Arabs and the Jews belong?

Q: What area in the world is considered to be the probable cradle of the Semitic race?

Q: By what different names were the Semitic peoples known when they migrated to Egypt, Canaan and Mesopotamia?

Q: What three great religions were given to the world by the Semitic people?

Q: When did the very first migration of the Semitic race occur?

Q: By what name were the Semitic people known who migrated from the Canaan area to Assyria?

Q: What were some of the famous cities in ancient Mesopotamia?

Q: By what name is known the oldest code of conduct existing today?

Q: Which Assyrian king conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel in 722 B.C.?

Q: What was the ancient capital of Assyria?

Q: Which king of the New Babylonian Empire conquered the Southern Kingdom of Judah in 586 B.C.?

Q: Which king defeated the Babylonians and allowed the Jews to return to their sacred city, Jerusalem?

Q: During the period of which Prophet did the Hebrews migrate from Canaan to Egypt?

Q: When did the Israelites leave Egypt and returned to their homeland in the Canaan area?

Q: What is special about the Semitic languages?

Q: Which language today is the closest to the ancient Semitic language?

ARABIA AT THE TIME OF PROPHET MUHAMMAD'S BIRTH

Q: In which year was the Holy Prophet born?

Q: The Meccans considered themselves the descendents of?

Q: What were the various religions that existed in Arabia at the time of Prophet Muhammad's birth?

Q: What Arab deities, aside from Allah, are mentioned in the Holy Quran?

Q: What Arab deities are not mentioned in the Holy Quran?

Q: What was the religion of the Sasanid Empire?

Q: What was the religion of the Byzantine Empire?

Q: What was the religion of the Abyssinian Kingdom?

Q: At the time of the Holy Prophet, who were the rulers of:

- Sasanid Empire:
- Byzantine Empire:
- Abyssinian Kingdom:

Q: What was the captial of the Byzantine Empire? By what other names has this city been known?

Q: Why was the year 570 AD called the Year of the Elephant?

PROPHET MUHAMMAD'S EARLY LIFE

Q: To which tribe did the Holy Prophet belong?

Q: Where was the Holy Prophet born?

Q: What was his father's name?

Q: What was his mother's name?

Q: What was his grandfather's name?

Q: Name four of his uncles.

Q: When did his father die?

Q: What was the name of the nurse who looked after him?

Q: How old was Muhammad when his mother died?

Q: Who looked after him after his mother's death?

Q: How old was Muhammad when his grandfather died?

Q: Who took him under his protection after his grandfather's death?

Q: What was the name of the peace committee which Muhammad joined in his youth?

MARRIAGE TO KHADIJAH

Q: How old was the Prophet Muhammad when he got married?

Q: Who was his first wife and how old was she at the time of marriage?

Q: Why did Khadijah employ Muhammad to look after her business?

Q: How many children were born to the Holy Prophet from his marriage to Khadijah?

Q: What was the name of the youngest daughter of the Holy Prophet?

Q: Which two daughters of the Holy Prophet married Uthman, the third Khalifa?

Q: Why did the Meccans consider the black stone of Ka'aba as sacred?

THE FIRST REVELATION

Q: Where did the Prophet use to retire for meditation?

Q: How old was he when he received the first revelation?

Q: What was the very first word (in Arabic) of the First revelation received by the Holy Prophet?

Q: To which Chapter of the Holy Quran does this first revelation belong?

Q: What incidence marks the beginning of Muhammad's prophethood?

Q: Which angel was responsible for bringing the revelation?

Q: To whom did the Holy Prophet report his first revelation?

Q: Who was Waraqa bin Naufal?

Q: How was Waraqa bin Naufal related to Khadijah?

Q: Did Waraqa bin Naufal believe what the Holy Prophet told him?

PREACHING IN MECCA AND THE OPPOSITION

Q: Who were the first to accept Islam among:
- the women
- the children
- the slaves

Q: From the top of which mountain did the Holy Prophet call the various tribes to listen to him?

Q: In a few words, what was the message of the Prophet?

Q: Was his message accepted by every one?

Q: Why did the chiefs of Mecca not accept his message?

Q: Who were the Prophet's strongest opponents at Mecca?

Q: What was Umar bin Hisham called by the Muslims, and why?

EMIGRATION TO ABYSSINIA

Q: When things became very difficult in Mecca, to which country did the first emigration take place?

Q: Who was the ruler of this country?

Q: How many Muslims took part in this first emigration?

Q: Did the Quraysh try to get these Muslims expelled from Abyssinia? were they successful?

Q: Who was the spokesman for the Muslims when they were summoned to the court of the King?

Q: From which Surah did Ja'far recite some verses for the King?

Q: How long did these first emigrants to Abyssinia stay in that country?

AL-MIRAJ

Q: What is Miraj?

Q: When did it take place?

Q: What was enjoined upon the Muslims on the occasion of the Miraj?

THE SECOND EMIGRATION TO ABYSSINIA

Q: When did the second emigration to Abyssinia take place?

Q: How many Muslims took part in this second emigration?

Q: When the Quraysh offered all sorts riches to the Holy Prophet, what did he reply?

Q: In the sixth year of the Prophet's call, two well known persons accepted Islam. What were their names?

BOYCOTT OF THE HASHIMITES

Q: Why were the Hashimites boycotted by the Quraysh?

Q: In which year did this boycott start?

Q: How long did the boycott last?

Q: What is meant by the year of the sorrow?

Q: For how long were Prophet Muhammad and Khadijah married?

Q: Did Abu Talib accept Islam before he died?

THE PROPHET VISITS TA'IF

Q: Why did the Prophet visit Ta'if?

Q: What was the chief idol of the people of Ta'if?

Q: Who accompanied the Prophet to Ta'if?

Q: How did the people of Ta'if receive his message?

Q: Where is Ta'if located?

Q: When an angel descended upon the Prophet and asked him if Ta'if should be destroyed, what did he answer?

Q: What was the name of the Christian slave who accepted Islam?

Q: Where was this slave from?

Q: Who was Jonah son of Mathew?

THE FIRST PLEDGE OF AQABAH

Q: When did the first pledge of Aqabah take place?

Q: How many people took this pledge?

Q: Why was this pledge known by this name?

Q: What was this pledge?

AL-ISRA

Q: What was Isra?

Q: In which year did Isra take place?

SECOND PLEDGE OF AQABAH

Q: How many persons took the second pledge at Aqabah?

Q: Where did these people come from who took these pledges?

HIJRAT TO MEDINAH

Q: After the pledge of Aqabah, to which city did the Muslims start migrating?

Q: In which year did the Hijrah take place?

Q: After leaving Mecca, where did the Prophet hide?

Q: Who was with him during this escape?

Q: Who tried to chase the Prophet to collect the reward?

Q: Why didn't he arrest or kill the Prophet?

Q: What did the Prophet foretell about Suraqa bin Malik?

Q: When was this prophecy fulfilled?

Q: Where was the very first mosque built by the Muslims?

Q: What is the Hijrah Calender?

Q: What freedoms did the Muslims enjoy in Yathrib which they did not have in Mecca?

LIFE AT MEDINAH

Q: When was the name of Yathrib changed to Medinah?

Q: At whose house did the Prophet first stay in Medinah?

Q: Who were called the Muhajiroon?

Q: Who were called the Ansar?

Q: How many Muhajiroon and Ansar were there in Medinah at the time of the Prophet's arrival?

Q: How did Islamic brotherhood start?

CONSTITUTION OF MEDINAH

Q: What were the various Jewish tribes living in Medinah?

Q: What were the prominent Arab tribes in Medinah?

Q: Why did the Holy Prophet prepare a charter for Medinah?

Q: Why was it necessary to have all disputes referred to the Holy Prophet for decision?

Q: Who gave the first Adhan in history?

THE BATTLE OF BADAR

Q: What was the name of the first battle fought between the Muslims and the Meccans?

Q: Where was this battle fought?

Q: How soon after the Hijrah was this battle fought?

Q: How many Muslims faced how many Meccans in this battle?

Q: Who was the leader of the Meccan forces?

Q: Who was the leader of the Muslim army?

Q: Name the three Muslims and three Meccans who faced each other in single hand to hand combat?

Q: Who won the battle of Badr?

Q: How many Muslims were lost in this battle and how many Meccans?

Q: How could the Meccan prisoners of war earn their freedom?

Q: Who was the first Muslim to lay down his life in a pitched battle?

Q: Who was Hind?

Q: Why did she want the Meccans to attack Medinah again?

Q: Who were called the "Munafiqoon" or hypocrites?

Q: Who was the leader of the hypocrites?

Q: Which Jewish tribe was expelled from Medinah after the battle of Badr?

Q: When the Muslims won the battle of Badr, the Byzantine armies were recapturing their lost territories from the Sasanid armies. What prophecy of the Holy Prophet was being fulfilled this day?

BATTLE OF UHUD

Q: How soon after Badr did the battle of Uhud take place?

Q: Who was the leader of the Meccan army?

Q: How large were the Meccan and Muslim armies?

Q: Why were the Muslim forces suddenly reduced from 1000 to only 700 after leaving Medinah?

Q: Which side won the first phase of the battle?

Q: Which Meccan general made a surprise attack on the Muslims from their rear?

Q: Who won the battle of Uhud?

Q: Which uncle of the Prophet was killed in this battle?

Q: How many Muslims and how many Meccans were killed in the battle of Uhud?

Q: Why was the battle of Uhud known by this name?

Q: Who was Ikrimah?

Q: Why did Hind cut open Hamzah's corpse?

Q: Why did the Muslims lose this battle?

Q: Which Jewish tribe was expelled from Medinah after the battle of Uhud?

THE MURDER OF MUSLIM MISSIONARIES

Q: How many Muslim missionaries were waylaid at ar-Raji?

Q: Which two Muslim missionaries were taken prisioners at ar-Raji and later executed?

Q: How many Muslim missionaries were killed at Bir Mauna?

BATTLE OF THE DITCH

Q: Why is the battle of the Ditch known by this name?

Q: In which year was this battle fought?

Q: How large was the Meccan army?

Q: How many Muslims defended Medinah?

Q: Was the Meccans' attack successful?

Q: With which Jewish tribe did the Meccans try to make a secret pact?

Q: Were many people killed in the battle of the Ditch?

Q: Why was the tribe of Banu Qurayzah punished?

Q: Who was asked to decide Banu Qurayzah's fate?

Q: What law was followed in punishing them?

Q: The ditch around Medinah was dug on whose advice?

BAI'AT-E RIDHWAN AND THE TREATY OF HUDAYBIA

Q: In which year did the Prophet first try to perform the pilgrimage after leaving Mecca?

Q: How many Muslims accompanied the Holy Prophet?

Q: Did the Meccans let the Muslims perform the pilgrimage?

Q: What was the name of the oath taken by the Prophet at this occasion?

Q: What was the name of the agreement which was signed between the Muslims and the Meccans?

Q: What were the terms in this treaty which were beneficial to the Muslims?

Q: What were the terms in the treaty which were to the advantage of the Quraysh?

Q: Who was Quraysh's representative at the signing of the treaty?

THE HOLY PROPHET SENDS LETTERS TO VARIOUS KINGS

Q: When the Holy Prophet sent letters to the various kings and rulers, to which territories did they belong?

- Heraclius:
- Chosroes Parvez:
- Negus (Najjashi):
- Muqauqis:
- Mundhir Taimi:
- al-Harith:
- Hawdah bin Ali:

Q: Did Heraclius, Emperor of Rome, think the Prophet was a true one?

Q: Who did Heraclius interrogate regarding the Prophet's background and claim?

Q: What did Chosroes, the Emperor of Iran, do after reading the Prophet's letter?

Q: What did the Prophet say when he learned that Chosroes had torn his letter?

Q: During which Caliph's time were the above words of the Prophet fulfilled?

Q: What did Negus, King of Abyssinia, say when he received the Prophet's letter?

Q: Why did the Muslim armies never invade Abyssinia?

Q: What did Muqauqis, the ruler of Egypt, do when he received the Prophet's letter?

Q: Did any of the kings or rulers receiving the letters accept Islam?

CONQUEST OF KHYBER

Q: Why did the Muslims march against the Jewish settlement at Khyber?

Q: How many Muslims took part in the battle of Khyber?

Q: In which year did this battle take place?

THE THREE DAY PILGRIMAGE

Q: In which year, after leaving Mecca, did the Holy Prophet perform his first pilgrimage?

Q: How many days did the Holy Prophet stay in Mecca?

THE BATTLE OF MUTAH

Q: What happened to the Prophet's envoy who was sent to the Ghassanid Prince at Damascus?

Q: How many Muslims took part in the battle of Mutah?

Q: What was the size of the Byzantine army?

Q: How far was Mutah from Medinah?

Q: Who was the commander of the Muslim army in the battle of Mutah?

Q: What Muslim commanders fell one after another in this battle?

Q: Who finally took the command of the Muslim army?

Q: When the Muslim army returned to Medinah, why did the people scold the Muslim soldiers?

Q: Compared with other battles the Muslims had fought before, what was different with the battle of Mutah?

Q: In which year was the battle of Mutah fought?

Q: Did Prophet Muhammad participate in this battle?

CONQUEST OF MECCA

Q: After the treaty of Hudaybiya, which tribe joined the Muslims and which tribe joined the Quraysh?

Q: After the Banu Bakr attacked the Khuza tribe, what were the three choices given to the Meccans by the Prophet?

Q: What alternative did the Quraysh accept?

Q: In which year did the conquest of Mecca take place?

Q: How large was the Muslim army?

Q: What did the Prophet do to the Meccans after conquering the city?

Q: What two arch enemies of the Holy Prophet were forgiven by him at the time of the conquest of Mecca?

Q: What did the Prophet do on entering Mecca?

Q: Under what terms was the peace offered to the Meccans when the Muslim army marched into the city?

BATTLE OF HUNAYN

Q: In which year was the battle of Hunayn fought?

Q: Why was this battle known by this name?

Q: Who did the Muslims fight in this battle?

Q: To which area did these tribes belong?

Q: Which side eventually won this battle?

Q: Who called out to the Muslims on behalf of the Prophet when the Muslims got all scattered in the field?

DISTRIBUTION OF BOOTY AND THE ANSAR'S UNHAPPINESS

Q: Why were the Ansars unhappy after the Battle of Hunayn?

Q: How did the Holy Prophet win the hearts of the Ansar and remove their grievances?

CAMPAIGN OF TABUK

Q: What caused the Holy Prophet to lead a campaign to Tabuk?

Q: How large was the Muslim army?

Q: In which year was this campaign undertaken?

Q: Did any fighting take place in this campaign?

Q: Why is the ninth year of the Hijrah called the "Year of Deputations?

THE FAREWELL PILGRIMAGE AND THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Q: How old was the Holy Prophet when he performed his last pilgrimage?

Q: From the top of which mount did he address the people?

Q: Where is this mount located?

Q: How many pilgrimages to Mecca did the Holy Prophet perform after emigrating from Mecca?

Q: What directives did the Prophet give in his farewell address?

Q: To which Surah does the last revelation belong which the Holy Prophet received after giving his farewell sermon?

THE PROPHET'S ILLNESS

Q: When the Holy Prophet was too ill, who was asked to lead the congregational Prayers?

Q: When did the Holy Prophet die?

Q: How old was he at the time?

Q: How long did his mission last?

WIVES OF THE HOLY PROPHET

Q: Which wife of the Holy Prophet was older than him?

Q: Which two wives of the Holy Prophet were not buried in the Jannat-ul Baqi graveyard in Medinah?

Q: Which lady holds the distinction of being the first to be wedded to the Holy Prophet after the death of Khadijah?

Q: Which two wives of the Holy Prophet were the daughters of his close Companions and Successors?

Q : Which wife of the Holy Prophet is the source of more than one-quarter of the Hadiths given in the compilations of Bukhari and Muslim?

Q: Which two wives died during the lifetime of the Holy Prophet?

Q: Of all the wives of the Holy Prophet, who was the last to die?

Q: Which three wives of the Holy Prophet were among the emigrants to Abyssinia?

Q: Which wife of the Holy Prophet was related most closely to him?

Q: Which two wives of the Holy Prophet were initially taken prisoners of war by the Muslims but were later freed by him?

Q: Which wife of the Holy Prophet was the daughter of one of his staunch enemies?

Q: The marriage ceremony of which wife of the Holy Prophet was presided over by Negus, the King of Abyssinia?

Q: Which wife of the Holy Prophet was of Jewish faith before marrying him?

Q: Which wife of the Holy Prophet was of Egyptian origin?

Q: Which wife of the Holy Prophet, other than Khadijah, bore him a child?

Q: Which wife of the Holy Prophet was a Christian before her marriage?

Q: In which graveyard were ten of the Prophet's twelve wives buried?

BATTLES FOUGHT DURING THE PROPHET'S LIFE

Q: During the lifetime of the Holy Prophet, how many Muslims lost their lives in armed conflicts?

Q: How many non-Muslims were killed in these armed conflicts?

SECTION 4: SUCCESSORS OF THE HOLY PROPHET

THE SYSTEM OF KHILAFAT IN ISLAM: THE PIOUS CALIPHATE

Q: The system of succession after the Holy Prophet is known in Islam as.....?

Q: How many Caliphates or dynasties came after the Holy Prophet?

Q: Which dynasty's period was the longest?

Q: How many years did the Pious Caliphate last?

Q: What are the names of the four Pious Khalifahs?

ABU BAKR

Q: How long was Abu Bakr's Khilafat?

Q: What were the three main problems he faced on becoming Khalifah?

Q: What are the names of some of the false prophets?

Q: With what two major kingdoms did Abu Bakr's armies fight?

UMAR BIN KHATTAB

Q: In which year did Umar become Khalifah and how long did his Khilafat last?

Q: On which three main fronts did his armies fight?

Q: Briefly itemize some of the administrative achievements of Umar?

Q: How did Umar die?

UTHMAN

Q: When did Uthman become the Khalifah and how long was his Khilafat?

Q: On what three fronts did the Muslims fight during the Khilafat of Uthman?

Q: Briefly, what three charges were laid against Uthman?

Q: What great service did Uthman perform regarding the Holy Quran?

Q: How did Uthman die?

ALI BIN ABU TALIB

Q: When was Ali elected as the Khalifah and how long did his Khilafat last?

Q: What were the various problems Ali faced as Khalifah?

Q: To which city did Ali move the capital from Medinah?

Q: In which battle did A'isha fight against Ali?

Q: In which battle did Muawiah fight against Ali?

Q: There were people who separated from Ali's group and did not accept peace and arbitration. What were they called?

Q: How did Ali die?

Q: Who became the Khalifah after Ali's death?

Q: Who opposed Hasan's Khilafat?

Q: What did Hasan do?

THE UMAYYAD CALIPHATE OF DAMASCUS

Q: How long did this Caliphate last?

Q: Who was the first Khalifah in this dynasty?

Q: How many Khalifahs came in this dynasty?

Q: Name some of the changes the Umayyads made in their system of Khilafat which were not good?

Q: Which Umayyad Khalifah is considered by Muslims as the Mujaddid of the first century of Islam?

Q: In which year did the Umayyad Khilafat end?

Q: Which dynasty came to power after the end of the Umayyad Caliphate?

THE ABBASID CALIPHATE OF BAGHDAD

Q: How long did this Caliphate last?

Q: How many Khalifahs came in this dynasty?

Q: Who was the first Khalifah of the Abbasids?

Q: Name some important Khalifahs of the Abbasids?

Q: When did Halaku Khan attack Baghdad?

Q: Which Abbasid Khalifah was killed by Halaku Khan?

Q: Name two famous Muslim physicians who lived during the Abbasid period?

Q: Name two famous Muslim astronomers who lived during the Abbasid period?

Q: Name two famous Muslim philosophers who lived during the Abbasid period?

Q: By what name is ibn Sina known in the West?

Q: By what name is al-Farabi known in the West?

Q: Which Muslim scientist is known as the father of modern Chemistry?

Q: Which Muslim astronomer invented the astrolabe?

Q: Which famous Muslim poet lived in Iran during the Abbasid period and wrote the "Shahnama"?

THE UMAYYAD CALIPHATE OF SPAIN

Q: Who founded the Umayyad dynasty in Spain?

Q: For how lond did Umayyads rule Spain as Amirs and Sultans?

Q: In which year was Khilafat established in Spain?

Q: Who was the first Khalifah of the Umayyads in Spain?

Q: How many Khalifahs came among the Umayyads in Spain?

Q: How long did the system of Khilafat last in Spain?

Q: In which year did the system of Khilafat end in Spain?

Q: What was the name used by the Arabs for the land of Spain?

Q: Name the most famous Muslim mystic of Spain?

Q: By what name is the Muslim philosopher, ibn Rushd, known in the West?

Q: Name a famous historian of Muslim Spain?

Q: Name two famous Muslim geographers of Spain?

Q: Name two famous travelers of Muslim Spain?

THE FATIMID CALIPHATE OF EGYPT

Q: In which year did the Fatimids found this Khilafat?

Q: How long did this Khilafat last?

Q: Who was the first Khalifah of this dynasty?

Q: To whom specifically did the Fatimids trace their ancestry?

Q: How many Khalifahs came in this dynasty?

Q: Who established the famous al-Azhar university of Cairo?

Q: Who was the last Khalifah of the Fatimid dynasty?

Q: Who removed this last Khalifah from power?

Q: Which Faitmid Khalifah had the longest reign of any Khalifah after the Holy Prophet Muhammad?

THE DEVELOPMENT OF SECTS IN ISLAM

Q: Approximately what percentage of Muslims belong to the Sunni and Shia streams of Islam?

Q: Name three sects from the Sunni stream of Islam?

Q: Name three sects from the Shia stream of Islam?

Q: To which sect of Islam do majority of the world's Muslims belong?

Q: To which sect of Islam do you belong?

Q: Who started the Wahhabi movement in Arabia?

Q: Who founded the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam?

Q: When was the Ahmadiyya Movement founded?

Q: Do the Shias accept the Khilafats of Abu Bakr, Umar and Uthman?

Q: Why are some Shias called Asna-ashariya?

Q: Which country in the world today has predominantly Shia population?

Q: Who is the religious leader of the Ismailis today?

SECTION 5: HISTORY OF AHMADIYYAT

WHAT IS AHMADIYYAT

Q: What is Ahmadiyyat?

Q: Is Ahmadiyyat a new religion?

Q: Who founded the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam?

Q: When was this Movement founded?

Q: What are the followers of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad called?

DIFFERENCES WITH SUNNI MUSLIMS

Q: The three fundamental differences in beliefs between the Ahmadi Muslims and the Sunni Muslims are related to:
1. ?
2. ?
3. ?

Q: What does the phrase *Khatam al-Nabiyyin* mean?

Q: Can prophets come after Prophet Muhammad?

Q: What must a prophet be who comes after Prophet Muhammad?

Q: Was Jesus Christ put on the cross?

Q: Did Jesus Christ die on the cross?

Q: Where did Jesus Christ actually die?

WHAT IS MEANT BY THE "PROMISED MESSIAH"

Q: By what different names is the latter-day Reformer known in the Hadith of the Holy Prophet?

Q: Why do Sunni Muslims think that Jesus Christ will return to this world again?

SIMILARITIES WITH JESUS CHRIST

Q: Were Jesus Christ and Mirza Ghulam Ahmad law giving propehts?

Q: Why did the Jews reject the prophethood of Jesus Christ?

Q: Did Jesus Christ come to found a new religion?

Q: Did Mirza Ghulam Ahmad come to found a new religion?

Q: What is common between the teachings of Jesus Christ and Mirza Ghulam Ahmad?

THE INSTITUTION OF MUJADDID IN ISLAM

Q: What is a Mujaddid?

Q: Who foretold about the coming of Mujaddids in the Muslim Community?

Q: How many Mujaddisd have come so far?

Q: Who was the first Mujaddid?

Q: Who was the last Mujaddid?

Q: Other than Mirza Ghulam Ahmad who else has claimed to be the Mujaddid of the fourteenth century of Islam?

BIRTH OF MIRZA GHULAM AHMAD

Q: When was Mirza Ghulam Ahmad born?

Q: Where was he born?

Q: What was his father's name?

Q: What was the name of his distant ancestor who came from Samarkand in the sixteenth century?

Q: Approximately how many years ago did this ancestor come to India?

Q: What was the initial name of the village founded by his ancestor?

Q: Where did Mirza Ghulam Ahmad obtain his early education?

FIRST MARRIAGE

Q: How old was he when he got married?

Q: What was his first wife's name?

Q: How many children were born from the first wife?

CIVIL SERVICE JOB IN SIALKOT

Q: Where did he take up a civil service job?

Q: How old was Mirza Ghulam Ahmad when he took up this job?

Q: How long did he work at this job?

Q: In which year did his mother pass away?

START OF REVELATION

Q: When did Mirza Ghulam Ahmad receive his first revelation and how old was he at the time?

Q: What are the words of an 1869 revelation which referred to his great blessings?

Q: At age forty, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad kept fasts for a long period. How long was this period?

DEATH OF FATHER

Q: What was the revelation received by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad which indicated that his father was going to die soon?

Q: When he was grieved at the prospects of his father's death, how did God comfort him?

Q: In which year did his father die?

Q: How old was Mirza Ghulam Ahmad when his father died?

WRITING OF BRAHIN-E AHMADIYYA

Q: What was the first major writing undertaken by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad?

Q: In how many volumes was this book published and when was the first volume published?

Q: What was the main theme of this first publication?

Q: How many books did Mirza Ghulam Ahmad write in his life and what was the purpose of writing these books?

APPOINTED AS A REFORMER

Q: When was Mirza Ghulam Ahmad appointed a Reformer by God?

Q: How old was he at the time?

SECOND MARRIAGE

Q: When did Mirza Ghulam Ahmad marry for the second time and what was the name of this second wife?

Q: How many childern were born from this second wife?

Q: How many of these children lived to an old age?

Q: Who was the most important of these children?

Q: When did Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's second wife die?

Q: How old was she at the time?

SOLITARY RETREAT IN HOSHIARPUR

Q: When did Mirza Ghulam Ahmad undertake a solitary retreat?

Q: Which place did he travel to for this purpose?

Q: How long was this solitary retreat?

Q: On what date, immediately after the solitary retreat, did he make a public announcement?

Q: Within what period was the promised son supposed to be born?

Q: What was the name of the first child born?

Q: What was the name of the second child born?

Q: What was the name of the promised son?

Q: When was he born and how old was he at the time of his death?

THE FOUNDING OF AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT

Q: When was Mirza Ghulam Ahmad commanded to take bai'at?

Q: On what day and where was the first bai'at taken?

Q: Who was the first person to take the bai'at?

Q: How many persons took bai'at on the first day?

Q: What was the purpose of taking this bai'at?

Q: As requirement for the bai'at, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad made some conditions. In these conditions, he asked the newcomers to DO certain things and also to STAY AWAY from certain things. Itemize these DOs and DON'Ts in a manner shown below:

DOs	DON'Ts

CLAIM TO MESSIAHSHIP

Q: In which year did Mirza Ghulam Ahmad proclaim himself to be the Promised Messiah and the Promised Mahdi?

Q: Is it necessary to believe in the death of Jesus Christ before one can believe in the Promised Messiah's claim?

ANNUAL GATHERING INSTITUTED

Q: When and where was the first gathering of the Ahmadiyya Movement held?

Q: How many persons participated in the first Gathering?

Q: When was the last Annual Gathering held in Rabwah?

PROPHECY REGARDING PANDIT LEKH RAM

Q: Who was Pandit Lekh Ram?

Q: When did the Promised Messiah announce the prophecy regarding Pandit Lekh Ram?

Q: Within what period was this prophecy supposed to be fulfilled and when was it actually fulfilled?

THE SIGN OF TWO ECLIPSES

Q: In which year did the sign of the two eclipses appear?

Q: On what days of the Ramadhan, were the moon and the sun supposed to be eclipsed according to the Hadith?

Q: What were the exact dates of these eclipses in the Gregorian calender?

Q: Besides Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, has any other person ever claimed this event in support of his own claim?

DISCOVERIES REGARDING BABA NANAK

Q: Who was Baba Nanak?

Q: What did Promised Messiah's discoveries regarding Baba Nanak show?

Q: What does the sacred cloak of Baba Nanak show?

Q: In which book of the Promised Messiah are these facts about the Sikh religion explained?

CONFERENCE OF RELIGIONS

Q: In which year was the Conference of Religions held?

Q: What was the title of the essay written by the Promised Messiah for this conference?

Q: Who read this essay in the conference?

ACCUSATION OF MURDER BY DR. MARTIN CLARK

Q: What was the name of the Christian missionary who filed a suit of murder against the Promised Messiah?

Q: In Which year did this incident take place? In whose court did this case come up for trial?

Q: What was the outcome of the case?

NEWSPAPERS OF THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT

Q: What was the first newspaper of the Ahmadiyya Community?

Q: When was it first published and who was its editor?

CHALLENGE TO JOHN ALEXANDER DOWIE

Q: What was the name of the person in the United States of America who claimed to be the fore-runner of Jesus?

Q: Why did the Promised Messiah issue him a challenge?

Q: When did Dowie die as a result of this challenge?

THE WILL

Q: When did the Promised Messiah write his will? what was the name of the booklet containing this will?

Q: In a vision the Promised Messiah saw a special graveyard. What was the name of this graveyard?

Q: In which city was this graveyard established?

JOURNEY TO LAHORE AND DEATH

Q: What was the Promised Messiah's last book?

Q: What was the last revelation received by the Promised Messiah?

Q: When did the Promised Messiah die?

Q: Where did he die?

Q: Where was he buried?

THE SYSTEM OF KHILAFAT AFTER THE PROMISED MESSIAH

FIRST KHALIFAH — MAULANA NOORUDDIN

Q: By what title are the successors of the Promised Messiah known?

Q: How many successors of the Promised Messiah were there?

Q: Who was the first successor of the Promised Messiah?

Q: When and where was Maulana Nooruddin born?

Q: What was his occupation?

Q: In which year did he accept Ahmadiyyat?

Q: What distinction did he hold among the early initiates to the Ahmadiyya Movement?

Q: In which year did he settle down in Qadian permanently?

Q: What were his main occupations at Qadian?

Q: Where was the first foreign mission established during his Khilafat?

Q: When did Maulana Nooruddin pass away?

Q: How long did his Khilafat last?

2ND KHALIFAH—MIRZA BASHIRUDDIN MAHMOOD AHMAD

Q: When and where was Mirza Bashiruddin born?

Q: From whom did he study the Holy Quran?

Q: What organization did he set up in 1911?

Q: The publication of what paper did he start in 1913?

Q: How old was he when he got elected as the Second Khalifah of the Ahmadiyya Movement?

Q: Who was the leader of the dissenters who did not perform the bai'at at the hand of the new Khalifah?

Q: Where did the dissenters go and set up their own organization?

Q: What do the members of this Lahori organization believe regarding the status of the Promised Messiah?

Q: In how many foreign countries were new missions opened during the khilafat of Khalifatul Masiah II?

Q: What scheme did Khalifatul Masih initiate under which all the foreign missions operate today?

Q: What scheme did Khalifatul Masih initiate under which missionary work is carried out inside Pakistan?

Q: Khalifatul Masih II set up various organizations for different age groups. To which organization do you belong? What is the age requirement for it?

Q: What is the name of the advisory body set up by Khaliftul Masih II?

Q: How often does it meet?

Q: When did Khalifatul Masih II introduce special meetings to make the public aware of true Islam?

Q: When did Khalifatul Masih II claim that he indeed was the Promised Son?

Q: In which cities were special meetings called to re-affirm this claim in front of the public?

Q: In which year did Khalifatul Masih II migrate from Qadian to Pakistan?

Q: When did he lay the foundation of a new centre at Rabwah?

Q: When was an attempt made on his life?

Q: When did Khalifatul Masih II pass away?

Q: What is the name of the Larger Commentary of the Holy Quran which he wrote?

THIRD KHALIFAH — MIRZA NASIR AHMAD

Q: What is the name of the electoral body established by Khalifatul Masih II for the election of the Khalifah?

Q: Who was elected the Third Khalifah of the Ahmadiyya Movement? When was he elected?

Q: What was his age at the time?

Q: What schemes were established by Khalifatul Masih III for the expansion of missinary activities abroad?

Q: In which year were the Ahmadies declared non-Muslims by the National Assembly of Pakistan?

Q: Who was the Prime Minister of the country at the time?

Q: What fate did this Prime Minister eventually meet?

Q: How old was he at the time of his execution?

Q: When did the Promised Messiah make his prophecy which applied to this person?

Q: How long was the Khilafat of Khalifatul Masih III?

THE FOURTH KHALIFAH — MIRZA TAHIR AHMAD

Q: Who became the Fourth Khalifah?

Q: When was he elected?

Q: Where was his election held?

Q: How old was he at the time of his election?

Q : Soon after becoming the Khalifah, he performed the opening ceremony of a new mosque and a mission. Where was this mosque located?

Q: When was he forced to leave for England?

SECTION 6: COMPARATIVE RELIGION

INTRODUCTION

Q: What religions started in India?

Q: What religions started in China?

Q: What religions started in the Near East?

Q: What religion started in Japan?

Q: What religion started in Iran?

Q: Which three religions of the world have pursued missionary activity vigorously?

Q: Give an example of an ethnic religion?

Q: Is Sikhism a revealed religion?

HINDUISM

Q: What do the Hindus call their own religion?

Q: Who was the founder of the Hindu religion?

Q: What are the Scriptures of the Hindu religion?

Q: What are the three main manifestations of the Universal Spirit in the Hindu religion?

Q: What is an Avatar?

Q: Do the Hindus believe in re-incarnation?

Q: Which is the holy city for the Hindus?

Q: Name some prophets of Hinduism?

BUDDHISM

Q: The religion of Buddhism is named after whom?

Q: What was the real name of Buddha?

Q: What does the word Buddha mean?

Q: In which countrey was Buddha born?

Q: In which century was Buddhism founded?

Q: Name the two important sects of Buddhism?

Q: What is the concept of Nirvana in Buddhism?

Q: Do the Buddhists believe in re-incarnation?

Q: Today the followers of Buddha worship him. Was this Buddha's intention?

Q: Name a country largely populated by the Buddhists?

JAINISM

Q: What does the word Jainism mean?

Q: Who founded this faith?

Q: In which century was this religion founded?

Q: What is the Jain principle of Ahimsa?

Q: Do the Jains believe in re-incarnation?

Q: Are there many Jains left in the world?

THE SIKH RELIGION

Q: What does the word Sikh mean?

Q: Whom do the Sikhs regard as the founder of their religion?

Q: Where did this religion originate?

Q: Did Baba Nanak embrace Islam?

Q: By what term are the great "teachers" known to the Sikhs?

Q: What is the holy book of the Sikhs?

Q: Do the Sikhs believe in re-incarnation?

CONFUCIANISM

Q: Who is this religion named after?

Q: What was the real name of Confucius?

Q: In which century did this religion start?

Q: In which country was this religion founded?

TAOISM

Q: What does the word Tao mean?

Q: Who was the founder of this religion?

Q: Did Lao-tze and Confucius live at the same time?

Q: Is Taoism a mojor religion in China today?

SHINTO

Q: What does the word Shinto mean?

Q: Who was the founder of Shinto?

Q: In which coutry did this religion originate?

Q: Is Shinto religion involved with nature worship today?

Q: Have conversions to this faith been very common in the past?

ZOROASTRIANISM

Q: Whom is this religion named after?

Q: Who was the founder of this religion?

Q: Where was this religion founded?

Q: What are the sacred books of this religion?

Q: Do Zoroastrians believe in revelation?

Q: Who was the last Zoroastrian king of the Sasanied Empire?

Q: What were the Zoroastrians called who left Iran and came to India?

Q: In which cnetury did these Zoroastrians come to India?

Q: Can non-Zoroastrians embrace this faith?

JUDAISM

Q: What is this religion named after?

Q: Who is considered to be the founder of this religion?

Q: In which area did this religion originate?

Q: What is the holy book of this religion?

Q: To which great Prophet do the Jews trace their ancestry?

Q: Who was the first king of the Israelites?

Q: When did the united kingdom of Israel break up into two separate kingdoms?

Q: When was the Northern kingdom of Israel conquered by the Assyrians?

Q: When was the Southern kingdom of Judea conquered by the Babylonians?

Q: Who is the last prophet mentioned in the Old Testament?

Q: Do the Jews believe in One God?

Q: What are the two prophets whose coming the Jews are still waiting for?

Q: Of all the world's other faiths, which is closest to Judaism?

Q: Do the Jews believe in the coming of the Messiah?

Q: Do the Jews believe Jesus Christ to be the Messiah?

CHRISTIANITY

Q: Who gave the word Christianity to this religion?

Q: Who was the founder of this faith?

Q: What was the Hebrew name of Jesus Christ?

Q: What does the word Christ mean?

Q: What are the holy books of the Christians?

Q: Where was Jesus Christ born?

Q: When was Jesus Christ born?

Q: How long did the mission of Jesus last in the Palestine area?

Q: Did Jesus die on the cross?

Q: To which land did Jesus travel after recovering from the ordeal of the cross?

Q: Did the early Christians believe that Jesus was the son of God?

Q: Under whose influence did the Christians start believing in the divinity of Jesus Christ?

Q: Under the reign of which king did Christianity become the official religion of the Eastern Roman Empire?

Q: Did Jesus Christ really teach that people should worship him?

Q: Was it the intention of Jesus Christ to found a new religion?

Q: Was Jesus Christ truly the son of God or just an Israelite Prophet?

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